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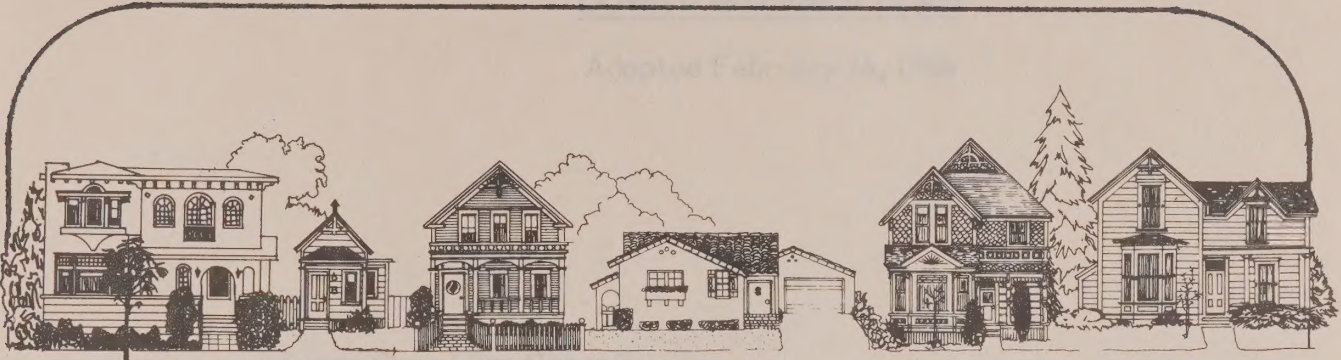
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DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN

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**PLANNING
DEPARTMENT**

**FEBRUARY
1984**

DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN

Adopted February 14, 1984

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PREFACE

The Downtown Area Plan is contained in two volumes. This volume, entitled The Downtown Area Plan, includes policies and programs for future activities in the downtown; it is the adopted plan. The companion volume, The Downtown Area Plan Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report, is a resource document. It includes maps, diagrams, statistics, and analyses pertaining to existing conditions in the downtown area--and pertinent issues (large or small)--all of which aided in the planning process. The Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report is essentially the research report from which the policies and programs for future action were derived. Copies of this report are available for review at the City Planning Department.

The Downtown Area Plan is the product of extensive public participation. Numerous interested groups and individuals participated in the planning program, providing initial descriptions of problems or issues to be addressed. They continued to work with various city commissions and committees to derive policies and programs responding to these situations. Many of the ideas which are reflected in this plan were contributed by these citizens.

The downtown area is the central core of the community, containing both residential and commercial land uses. By virtue of the wide range of interests in the downtown, and the numerous problems and opportunities that exist in this area, the plan is a consensus document attempting to provide direction for development in the downtown for the foreseeable future. As adopted, it is an amendment to the City of Santa Cruz General Plan, and provides a policy basis for review of individual projects, public works, and other such activities in the downtown area.

The general philosophy of the Downtown Area Plan--derived from the public participation and planning process--is to use existing resources more intelligently and efficiently. This recognizes that the city's fiscal opportunities for major change are limited, and that the downtown planning area is highly urbanized with little vacant land remaining for new uses or facilities. The plan addresses

specific opportunity sites and suggests possible courses of action for these locations to demonstrate that development and design opportunities exist within the downtown. It also attempts to deal with overall problems such as circulation, parking, and related issues in terms of beneficial and low-cost programs which will address difficulties and improve conditions within the downtown planning area.

It should be noted that the downtown has many assets. With construction of the Pacific Garden Mall in the late 1960's, the city took a giant step in preserving social and economic integrity in the central business district. Many older communities are afflicted with decay and the evacuation of the central core because they did not respond to the challenges of suburban shopping centers or other such developments. The City of Santa Cruz has created an ongoing amenity in the Pacific Garden Mall. Office uses (which are burgeoning in the downtown area), retail stores, eating and drinking establishments, and other entertainment and cultural facilities provide a strong base for the future of the downtown. The Pacific Garden Mall compliments all of these activities. By providing a pleasant environment in which they occur, the mall contributes substantially to the vitality of the downtown.

A similar renaissance has occurred in the surrounding residential neighborhoods with the rehabilitation and restoration of many older and/or historic residences. These residential areas benefit from the healthy condition of the mall even though traffic and parking problems result from the proximity of the downtown business core and residential neighborhoods.

As noted in the text of the Downtown Area Plan, particularly the economics section, the downtown has a future as the office, business, and financial center not only for the City of Santa Cruz but for the entire county. It is the seat of government, a specialty retail area of significant draw and appeal, and the entertainment and recreational focus of Santa Cruz County. In addition, rehabilitation of residential structures in the downtown--and the innate appeal and value of the living environment--also ensure the continued viability of residential development in the area. This future can be encouraged through the use of intelligent planning and application of the policies and programs contained in this Downtown Area Plan.

SECTION I - INTRODUCTION

THE PLANNING AREA

The physical characteristics of the planning area--and a brief description of the historical context of the downtown--are provided below. As noted in the Preface, additional background information is contained in the Downtown Area Plan Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report.

Area Description

The Downtown Area Plan covers five distinct subareas: the Downtown Core, the North River Street subarea, the South Pacific Avenue subarea, the Downtown Neighborhood, and the Mission Hill subarea (refer to Map #1). The boundaries of the planning area encompass 250 acres, of which approximately 100 acres are devoted to residential uses, 37 acres to retail uses, 28 acres to services, 7 acres to manufacturing, and approximately 77 acres to public and quasi-public facilities (these figures are exclusive of acreage devoted to streets).

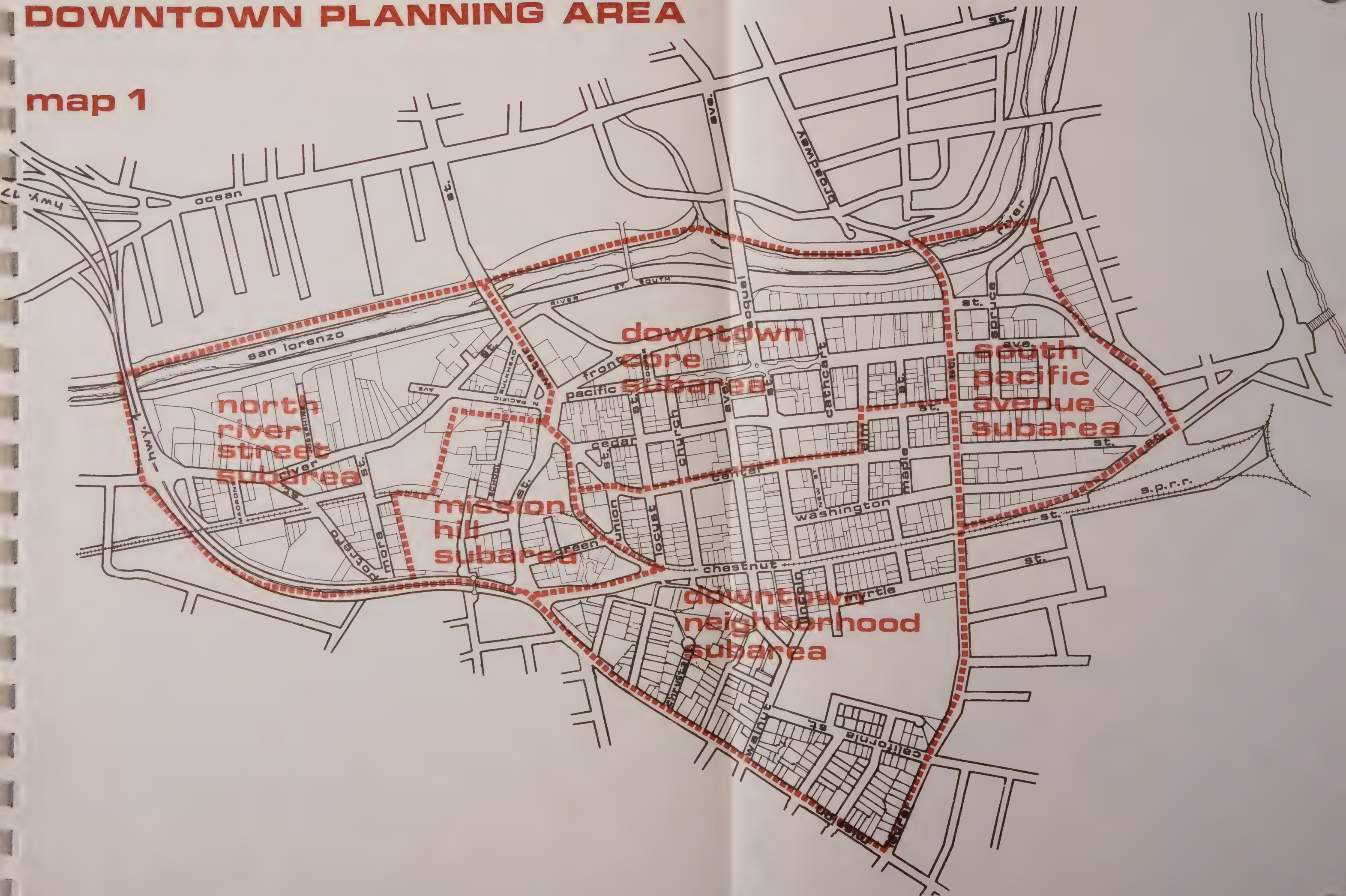
The planning area includes approximately 1,450 dwelling units, a large number of which (650) are multiple dwellings (five or more units). There are 304 retail businesses located in the planning area, 332 businesses in the service sector, and 41 businesses in the manufacturing category. The total floor area for these businesses is approximately 2,345,000 square feet. Although the downtown planning area includes the majority of retail, office, and service square footage in the city, and is also a very important geographic area in terms of housing units, it is a relatively small proportion of the overall city acreage encompassing approximately 4% of the city's land area.

Historical Context

The city's history began with the Mission La Exaltacion de la Santa Cruz, which was established in 1791 on the lowlands adjacent to the San Lorenzo River. Due to flooding, it was moved to the top of the bluff (Mission Hill) in 1793. Approximately 50 years later, as a byproduct of the discovery of gold in California, the American period in Santa Cruz really began. The early lumbering, tannery, limestone, cattle,

DOWNTOWN PLANNING AREA

map 1



agricultural, and seaport industries were augmented by tourism as early as the mid-1860's. The town's mild climate and beaches were the major attractions, as well as the redwood forests in the nearby Santa Cruz Mountains. The famed Sea Beach Hotel was built in the Boardwalk area in 1890 and the original Boardwalk Casino was constructed in 1904.

The first wharf to serve the growing Santa Cruz community was constructed in 1853. Between that date and 1914, when the present municipal wharf was constructed, four wharves were built to serve the city's various commercial activities.

During this same time (1850-1900) the downtown area was developing. The original one-block-long downtown was located on Front Street (between Water Street and Soquel Avenue). It was supplanted as the main business district in the late 1870's when Pacific Avenue experienced a building boom and commercial buildings replaced the gardens, orchards, and homes that once fronted on the avenue. As the industries in Santa Cruz experienced their various cycles of life, the downtown area continued to grow as a business and commercial center. Tourism, particularly with the popularization of the automobile as a means of transportation, became a more significant factor in the economy through the early 1900's. Pacific Avenue became the first street in the City of Santa Cruz to have utilities placed underground; this occurred during the 1920's. Some of the older residential areas in the City of Santa Cruz are within the downtown planning area as a result of corresponding residential development between the 1850's and the 1920's and 30's.

The downtown area began to decline in appearance and function in the late 1940's and 50's as the physical plant, particularly Pacific Avenue, aged. Community concern and the enthusiastic efforts of Chuck Abbott, a noted photographer who had retired to Santa Cruz, resulted in development of the concept of the Pacific Garden Mall. The mall was completed in 1969, and since that time the Pacific Garden Mall has continued as a viable commercial area, avoiding the decay and abandonment characteristic of other older downtown areas.

In recent times, the city as a whole, and the downtown planning area in particular, have been affected by the establishment of the University of California at Santa Cruz in the early 1960's, by the general growth of Santa Cruz during the last 30

years, and by an increased demand for (and resulting competition in) the housing market.

These recent trends are related to population in both the city and the county. The 1980 Census indicated that the City of Santa Cruz had a population of 41,483, compared to a population of 32,100 in 1970. The growth rate during that decade was approximately 2.9% per year. During the same period, the population of the County of Santa Cruz grew from 123,800 in 1970 to 188,141 in 1980. This represents an average growth rate of approximately 4.6% per year. Thus, the City of Santa Cruz, the more established and developed older segment of the county, continues to grow at a moderate pace, but is becoming a smaller percentage of the overall county population. This demographic shift affects the City of Santa Cruz as a whole, and particularly the downtown planning area. Implications for the retail, office, and commercial activities in the downtown are discussed in the economics section of this Downtown Area Plan.

History provides a useful context for the planning process since many of the problems and issues in the area today are a legacy of the past. For example, the issue of customer/employee parking versus residential parking on city streets results from the age of the downtown housing stock. Early zoning regulations did not anticipate the off-street parking required to provide for today's number of automobiles. Thus, many downtown residents are forced to park on the street--competing with commercial users of these spaces. This area plan attempts to address such difficulties which have evolved through time.

OBJECTIVES OF THE DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN

Development of an area plan is a method for articulating the opportunities, difficulties, and problems that exist in an area and formulating effective methods for dealing with them. In the case of the Downtown Area Plan, there are area-wide issues to be addressed, problems or opportunities in each of the five subareas, and specific opportunity sites that exist within the planning area. These subjects are discussed below.

Area-Wide Issues

Area-wide issues involve principally the topics of land use/economics, circulation and parking, and public facilities and services.

Land Use/Economics

To ensure the continuing economic viability of the downtown, it is imperative to have an intelligent approach to economic issues based upon the strengths rather than the weaknesses of the downtown area. As part of the downtown planning effort, the city retained the consulting firm of Recht Hausrath and Associates to develop ten-year forecasts for economic activity in the downtown. Their projections indicate that the downtown will continue to become the financial and office center of Santa Cruz County with attendant specialty retail and entertainment uses such as restaurants and drinking establishments. Tourism will also figure prominently in the economic future.

The economics section of this area plan provides specific recommendations and programs to build upon the area's economic potential within a realistic framework. The area plan attempts to sort out various demands for space downtown, and provide locations which best achieve city goals as well as owner's desired plans. The geographic subareas within the downtown provide different land use opportunities and will play different roles in the economic future of the city.

Circulation and Parking

In terms of circulation, the challenge in the Downtown Area Plan is to formulate a circulation system that responds to the requirements for overall traffic flow within the city, efficient circulation in the commercial core, and the need to protect residential neighborhoods. Section IV of this plan, Circulation and Parking/Public Facilities and Services, provides specific recommendations to attain these goals.

As to parking, the objective of the Downtown Area Plan is to quantify the need for additional commercial parking in the downtown, in conjunction with the projected economic future for the downtown, and to propose recommendations for new facilities, their locations, and appropriate management techniques (such as

restriping existing facilities) to gain additional spaces. In addition, solutions to the problem of inadequate residential parking in the downtown area--and the need for possible preferential parking in certain vicinities--need to be developed that do not have an adverse effect on other adjacent residential areas and/or the need for commercial parking downtown.

Public Facilities and Services

Principal objectives relative to public facilities and services include accommodating and enhancing the public transportation system in the downtown, in particular, adapting to the relocation of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District center (south of Cathcart between Pacific Avenue and Front Street). Other objectives include changes to the city's directional signing system, both to improve the consistency and format of the signing, and to work out access routes for tourists and local residents that attain their destinations efficiently and yet do not impact residential neighborhoods. Again, these subjects are addressed in Section IV of the plan.

Subarea Issues

Each of the five subareas within the Downtown Area Plan boundaries has its own problems and opportunities reflecting history and each area's mix of land uses. The objectives of the plan are to improve conditions relative to any problems that exist, and to develop approaches to maximize the opportunities which are yet unrealized in each of the five subdivisions.

Downtown Core Subarea

Improving the economic life and social atmosphere of the Pacific Garden Mall are principal objectives in the Downtown Core. In the private sector, existing business and property owners should coordinate their efforts toward this end. In the public sector, it will be important to provide an efficient circulation system and ample parking opportunities. Additional objectives include coordinating future land uses with the economic opportunities that exist now and in the future, creating an urban design approach to enhance the overall appearance of the downtown, and determining the ultimate boundaries of the mall.

North River Street Subarea

The North River Street subarea includes considerable vacant land. Thus land use patterns and the physical form of the area are not well defined. Objectives of the plan are to formulate land use policies that will enhance the economic potential of the area and creation of a design approach for North River Street that will improve its appearance. Physical improvement of River Street--one of the major entryways to the city--is another major objective, as well as provision of housing opportunities in the area as called for in the General Plan.

South Pacific Avenue Subarea

The South Pacific Avenue subarea presents three principal challenges. General Plan land use policy indicates a mixture of multi-residential uses and community commercial uses which generally coincide with the existing land use patterns. Residential uses have continued in the area despite commercial zoning that has been in effect since the 1960's. Methods for accommodating the residential uses in accordance with the General Plan need to be derived.

Of major concern is the future of automobile dealerships in this location and impacts on adjacent residential uses. The General Plan calls for retention of the dealerships within the City of Santa Cruz, and an objective of the plan is to facilitate their operation in harmony with adjacent residential uses.

Finally, an objective in this area involves productive use of certain vacant parcels at the southern end of the subarea. This location is a link between the beach area and the downtown and could be made more attractive and functional. Potential for visitor-serving and other uses at this location are addressed in Section III.

Downtown Neighborhood Subarea

A major objective of the plan in the Downtown Neighborhood is addressing the mutual need for parking for commercial/employee users and the need for on-street residential parking (resulting from the insufficiency of off-street parking in this older neighborhood). Facilitating traffic flow--improving the quality of life on residential streets--is another primary objective. And absolutely basic to the

viability of the Downtown Neighborhood is the continued encouragement of housing rehabilitation in the area.

Mission Hill Subarea

The Mission Hill subarea shares some of the problems of the Downtown Neighborhood relative to parking and circulation. In addition, potential impacts on residential uses may come from development of the Neary-Rodriguez Adobe as a state park. An objective of the plan is to accommodate increased public use of the adobe while maintaining the integrity of the adjacent historic neighborhood.

Opportunity Sites

Objectives of the plan relative to specific opportunity sites are discussed in Section V of the plan. Basically, there are three major opportunity sites within the planning area. The first is the area around the Town Clock, including Knight and Bulkhead streets. This area has the potential, over time, to be integrated with the mall both in uses and aesthetics.

The San Lorenzo River, and adjacent parcels, is another opportunity site of great significance. Flood control, potential enhancement of adjacent land uses, and development of an aesthetic approach to the river are all objectives of the plan to maximize the benefits of this potential public resource. A specific site treatment for the river near the Albertson's/Long's complex is illustrated in Section V; flood control is addressed in Section IV.

Finally, the Abbott Square/old County Jail complex is another opportunity site within the downtown that has much potential. Land use options and a design plan pertaining to this site are also included in Section V.

POLICY BASIS: THE GENERAL PLAN

The City of Santa Cruz General Plan (adopted in January 1980) defines a set of broad goals for community growth through the year 1990. It presents policies and programs designed to guide development in Santa Cruz in terms of community form and size, environmental resource management, residential opportunities, economic opportunities, community design, and transportation and public facilities.

While the General Plan deals effectively and definitively with overall development of the city through the year 1990, any particular policy or program--and its application to a specific area of the city--is open to interpretation or debate. Rethinking of specific aspects of the General Plan is natural to the planning process. This is inevitable because, in developing a General Plan, the same detail and attention cannot be given to the entire city that can be devoted to a specific neighborhood in an area plan. Thus, in developing an area plan, General Plan policies and programs must be scrutinized to see if they apply to the particular area under consideration. In some instances, General Plan policies and programs may be contradictory when applied to a specific location or situation. At that point, the benefits of each policy must be weighed against each other. In this fashion, area-wide concerns are guaranteed consideration and at the same time local needs and preferences are expressed in a detailed plan developed for a specific area.

General Plan Policies

A rigorous analysis of the General Plan in terms of the downtown planning area was carried out in the Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report. Anyone interested in studying the policy basis of the plan should refer to that document. However, General Plan policies relevant to major topics covered in the planning process are cited below to serve as illustrations of the General Plan policy basis for the Downtown Area Plan. These General Plan policies pertain to land use, circulation, economics, housing, public facilities and services, and urban design. These policies have served as a basis for development of the Downtown Area Plan. They have provided general guidelines and rationale for the specific recommendations and programs proposed for the area.

Land Use: Enhance the livability of residential areas through land use regulation and provisions of public facilities and services to meet the needs of each neighborhood.

Circulation: Provide efficient and environmentally sound transportation facilities consisting of roads, bikeways, rail lines, transit systems, and pedestrian paths.

Economics: Consistent with the city's goal for a balanced community, encourage the development of enterprises that contribute to the economic base of the city.

Encourage commercial and industrial enterprises including the arts and crafts, office type occupations, specialty retail stores, and research and development industries.

Housing: In preparing area plans, study the opportunities for intensifying residential land uses in already developed land areas, including downtown, along major streets, and around commercial development, without adversely affecting the character of the existing neighborhood.

Public Facilities: Phase the provision of public and quasi-public facilities and services with population growth. Prepare a community services element to the General Plan to establish a policy direction for the provision of community services.

Urban Design: Maintain the natural features of Santa Cruz to ensure that its community design contains elements of its unique natural setting. Develop design criteria in area plans that recognize and preserve unique neighborhood character and consider community-wide needs.

Summary

These are goals of the General Plan; their application to the downtown planning area is dependent upon the specific policies and action programs contained in the following sections of this Downtown Area Plan.

SECTION II - ECONOMICS

THE DOWNTOWN: REGIONAL RESOURCE

The Downtown Core, and areas immediately adjacent to it, constitute the center of commerce and finance for northern Santa Cruz County and the center of government for the entire county. An estimated 100,000 county residents--in addition to countless thousands of visitors--utilize downtown facilities on a regular basis. The Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District center and the Greyhound bus terminal are located within the planning area. These facilities add to the focus of the area as a center of activity and travel. Many restaurants and entertainment facilities are on or about the Pacific Garden Mall. Professional offices and service businesses are located in the area along with numerous specialty retail stores. County-wide cultural facilities are located in the vicinity as well: the Santa Cruz Main Library (a joint city and county facility) and the Civic Auditorium. Thus, the downtown is truly a regional resource: the county seat, the financial, cultural, and entertainment center for Santa Cruz County, a major office and retail center, and, following the beaches and Boardwalk, the largest tourist attraction in Santa Cruz County.

In addition to its physical attributes--private buildings and public facilities--the downtown also provides a cultural and historical wealth that cannot be purchased with any amount of dollars. The downtown is blessed with many outstanding architectural examples, and the overall appearance and ambience of the downtown--particularly of the Pacific Garden Mall--are attributes which simply cannot be replicated.

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The city retained the consulting firm of Recht Hausrath and Associates to develop 10-year forecasts for economic activity in the downtown. The economic study has been an integral part of the downtown area planning process. It provides a forecast of downtown retail and office growth and identifies local community actions and policy decisions that could affect future downtown commercial activity. Implications can be drawn from this study regarding parking and circulation demands and other topics considered in the Downtown Area Plan.

The conclusions reached by the Recht Hausrath study regarding the economic future of the downtown are described below.

Retail Activity (1980-1990)

Resident shoppers, out-of-county visitors, and downtown office employees and clients will contribute to future retail sales growth in downtown Santa Cruz. As noted under the heading Office Activity (below), significant employment increases are projected; these employees and clients in expanded office uses will be key contributors to expanded retail activity in the downtown. Visitors are also clearly a significant factor in downtown retail activity. In combined retail activities, visitors currently contribute 15% of downtown sales. Visitors are particularly important for restaurants and bars downtown, contributing about 25% of total sales. For shoppers' goods, visitor spending represents about 15% of downtown sales, with most of these sales in the specialty shopping category.

The retail forecast reflects a continued strong role for visitor spending in the downtown. It assumes that visitor spending increases downtown by at least the same rate as county-wide growth of visitor spending. As a result, visitor sales are forecast to become a slightly larger share of total retail sales downtown by 1990. Local promotional efforts to familiarize visitors with the downtown area will be important in increasing the downtown's attraction and improving its ability to capture visitor sales. In the retail sphere, the conclusions of the economic study were as follows:

- The sale of shoppers' goods will increase 20% during the decade; this figure is predicated on shoppers' goods increasing by only 7% during the decade but specialty retail sales increasing by 50%, yielding a net increase of 20%. Although this represents an increase in dollars spent, it reflects a decrease in the downtown area's percentage of sales of shoppers' goods within the county.
- Restaurant and tavern uses will increase by over 50% during the decade.
- In terms of retail space expansion during this time frame, the forecast is for 3,200 to 6,500 additional square feet per year. This is a modest rate of expansion in the retail sector.
- In addition to employment growth due to office activity downtown, there will be more workers in the area as a result of increased retail activity. Forecast

growth in retail stores, restaurants, and bars is estimated to provide about 240 new jobs in the downtown by 1990.

It is also projected that no major department store will locate in the downtown Santa Cruz area. The downtown is at a competitive disadvantage compared to alternative county locations, particularly with regard to both satisfying a department store's conditions for parking, access, and visibility, and for offering a suitably large site within the shopping center setting that major stores find attractive (adjacent stores, common hours, coordinated advertising, overall management control). Moreover, rents and land prices are currently well above the range expected by a department store in a shopping center setting.

Office Activity (1980-1990)

The amount of growth in office space downtown depends on the growth in overall county office employment, alternative office expansion locations, and the relative attractiveness of downtown development opportunities. In the office area, however, the city has a number of competitive advantages over alternative locations.

The projections for office expansion suggest that the downtown will become increasingly attractive to firms that appreciate being near the center of county government and financial activity and that value the amenities which downtown locations offer to employees and clients. A summary of office projections is as follows:

- Employment in office activities in the downtown area is projected to increase by 400 to 900 jobs during the decade.
- It is estimated that 10,000 to 22,500 square feet per year will be added to the office space inventory during the decade, a relatively robust rate of annual expansion.
- The above growth in the office sector is predicated on significant development in the North River Street area. This is the segment of the downtown planning area that has the most available space matching office use requirements.

Adaptive reuse of the old County Jail facility could provide an opportunity for office expansion in the downtown. If the existing building were renovated, offices would probably be the most marketable use, complemented by business services or recreational facilities, a few shops at street level and/or a restaurant. Such a renovation could bring a significant amount of office space on the market and would probably be undertaken in phases. The economic projections relative to office expansion also indicate that there is a potential tradeoff between office development in North River Street and office development in the Downtown Core subarea, particularly Parcel 2H (a mixed use office/retail development was approved by the Redevelopment Agency for this parcel in 1982), and potential development of the old County Jail site.

Automobile Dealerships

The future of retail automobile sales in the downtown area is of significance since new cars are an important source of sales tax revenue for the city. In recent years, new car sales have accounted for over 20% of total sales in city retail stores--the largest single source of sales tax revenue. As a result, city policy set forth in the General Plan encourages retention of dealerships in the downtown area and elsewhere within the city limits. A supportive fact is the shortage of land outside the city that is economically feasible for the relocation of dealerships or for new dealerships. In addition, city policy calls for working with the dealers individually or collectively to retain them. This can be accomplished through promotion, signing, individual site design, and other actions.

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS FOR FUTURE ACTION

Several of the policies and programs for future action discussed below will be implemented through activities described in other sections of the Downtown Area Plan. For example, additional parking for expanded retail activities in the downtown is covered in the Downtown Core discussion and under public facilities and services. However, several policies and programs relative to economics are presented here. These fall into three categories: general trends, private sector actions, and public sector actions.

General Trends

It is clear from the conclusions of the Recht Hausrath study that the future of the downtown lies in expanded specialty retail activities and a significant increase in office uses. This coincides with other recent research. The Downtown Research and Development Center, a non-profit organization devoted to promoting central core areas of cities, has concluded that there is a new kind of economy emerging: "It is based on office activity (public and private), services to people, business services, entertainment, and culture." This matches the conclusions of the Recht Hausrath study of the City of Santa Cruz.

Thus, in general terms, the city should build upon its inherent advantages. The existing buildings and the capital investment they represent, plus the historic aspects of the downtown--its style and architecture--are the attributes it has over external competition. In pointed terms, plastic cannot compete with brick. For ambience and character, the downtown has distinct advantages over all other retail and business nodes in the county. In the same vein, the downtown should build according to economic reality. It does not appear that there is a suitable site nor suitable environment to attract a major retailer.

At the same time, the downtown must face and overcome real problems. Some of these include a deficiency in nearby parking for customers and employees (this is not an insurmountable problem but one of parking management and the astute addition of specific parking facilities), and problems of image. For example, negative attitudes toward transients on the mall is a distinct problem in many people's minds.

Private Sector Actions

As noted in the Recht Hausrath study, retailing downtown would benefit from expanded, coordinated marketing and promotional efforts. These private sector activities might include promotions sponsored by downtown merchants such as downtown-wide sales, entertainment, art shows, or even sports activities, in which the Pacific Garden Mall is used as the focus. A coordinated strategy for promotional marketing efforts would also be beneficial. Adoption of a Pacific Garden Mall logo could be part of this program. Expanded hours and hours tailored

to employees as a larger segment of the buying public in the downtown would also complement these activities.

Efforts to familiarize visitors with activities downtown could be successful in attracting proportionately more tourist spending to the downtown area. As noted by Recht Hausrath, there is distinct potential to increase the downtown share of county visitor spending. As office activities increase downtown, promotional efforts to familiarize employees with downtown stores will also be important. Thus, local business people must be willing to change their own ways of doing things, giving up some individuality so they can participate in the common good. Again, shopping centers show that this is an effective merchandising technique.

The city (the public sector) could be helpful in these efforts, for example, by granting permits to close streets temporarily for promotional activities in the Downtown Core. But the essence of expanded retail functions in the downtown is promotion--and this is inherently an activity of the private rather than the public sector.

One vehicle for promotion is advertising--paid for by the city promotion tax. An example of the necessity for consideration of the adequacy of the existing promotion tax is comparison to similar activities undertaken by other shopping areas. The Capitola Mall has an advertising budget of \$28,000. This does not include staffing for its various functions or other activities, which would perhaps as much as double this resource. Another similar shopping center, Northridge Center in Salinas (which competes with a downtown area), spends \$81,000 per year (1982 expenditures).

Santa Cruz's promotion tax, which is based on a zone of interest fee tied to parking space requirements, has not kept pace with competition in more closely managed shopping centers such as the Capitola Mall. In 1977, the city's promotion tax raised \$17,470. In 1981, the tax raised \$18,767. During that period, the tax did not even keep pace with inflation. The result is that promotion activities for downtown area businesses do not match the number of businesses or even the promotion activities of the Capitola Mall, which contains much less commercial square footage. If the downtown area hopes to maintain its commercial position, increase specialty shopping, and attract new merchandisers, a serious look must be given to an increase in this tax.

Public Sector Actions

Local community decisions and actions will have an effect on future downtown commercial activity. The city maintains certain public facilities such as streets, parking, and parks, and affects private development through regulations.

The city can play an important role in the North River Street subarea through actions to encourage a more beneficial development pattern. These include standards or guidelines for access, site coverage/building placement and design, as well as incentives for combining parcels or for coordinating development on adjacent parcels. These policy changes would facilitate a coordinated, area-wide approach for new office activity. (The North River Street subarea is discussed specifically under Section III of the plan.)

Local policies and decisions could also affect the extent of office development in the Downtown Core subarea. The city has approved a mixed use retail/office development for Parcel 2H (within the Redevelopment Project area), and the old County Jail site could also be a mixed use project. Many developers find building in the downtown a complex and difficult matter; the city's continuing positive stance will be a requirement for new development and adaptive reuse to occur.

As previously noted, business promotion in the downtown is primarily the realm and responsibility of the private sector. However, the public sector could participate through a program of free parking in the downtown on Saturday. This would be part of a joint public/private promotional campaign organized around the theme "Saturday is Pacific Garden Mall Day." The intent would be to promote the downtown as a shopping, recreation, eating and entertainment experience for county residents and visitors alike. All these things are available in the downtown--and not available in shopping centers in the wealth and profusion which the downtown has to offer. The ambience of the Pacific Garden Mall is a marketing asset: people come there because they enjoy the atmosphere. The park-like environment and the character of the buildings are attributes that shopping centers simply cannot match. Coupled with the cultural, performing arts and entertainment options in the downtown, this package only needs coordinated and effective promotion to capture more of the market.

In summary, the findings of the Recht Hausrath study indicate that there is more than sufficient commercially zoned property in the downtown area to accommodate future commercial and office growth. This eliminates the need to elevate more property to commercial zoning. It also encourages consideration of creative reuse of existing commercial properties and the use of some existing commercial land for housing or research and assembly uses.

Development of Opportunity Sites

The section of the city with the greatest available open space is the North River Street subarea. The San Lorenzo River (and adjacent parcels), the Town Clock area, and the Abbott Square/old County Jail complex are the remaining principal opportunity sites within the downtown planning area. Each of these is discussed in detail in Section V, Opportunity Sites. The city should be prudent in the development of these sites, for such opportunities are relatively rare in the downtown. (Parcel 2H would be listed in this category; however, a mixed use retail and office development of 52,000 square feet has been approved.) The public sector and the private sector need to cooperate so that these important opportunity sites are not squandered in relatively unaesthetic, non-productive, or non-contributory kinds of uses.

SECTION III - DOWNTOWN SUBAREAS

This section of the plan contains policies and programs pertaining to the five geographic subdivisions within the planning area: the Downtown Core, the North River Street subarea, the South Pacific Avenue subarea, the Downtown Neighborhood, and the Mission Hill subarea. Each of the five subdivisions is defined by certain topographic features, major streets, concentrations of land use types, architecture, opportunities, or other characteristics which facilitate analysis and planning. Many of the most detailed recommendations in the Downtown Area Plan are contained in this section, responding to very specific problems and opportunities within the subareas.

DOWNTOWN CORE

The Downtown Core functions as the retail center for the City of Santa Cruz, and the office, specialty retail, cultural, and entertainment center for the entire county. The area is also a housing resource for a significant number of people.

The Downtown Core, with the Pacific Garden Mall as its physical spine, is the center of commercial and cultural life within the City of Santa Cruz. The policies and action programs that are included in this section of the plan are intended to foster economic activity to ensure the continued viability of the downtown through time. The policies and action programs are also intended to improve circulation and parking within the downtown, to enhance the area's appearance, and to make recommendations for the use of opportunity sites located within this subarea (refer to Section V, Opportunity Sites).

Overview

Map 2 shows the boundaries of the Downtown Core. The subarea contains approximately 70 acres, virtually all of which are currently zoned Community-Commercial. With the exception of a small number of light manufacturing and printing operations, the Downtown Core contains principally retail and service uses. These two constitute 47% of all land uses in the subarea (approximately 33 acres).

**downtown
core
subarea**



map 2

Forty-two percent of the subarea land (or approximately 30 acres) is in public facilities uses. This is a high percentage within the overall downtown planning area due, in large measure, to the area devoted to public parking (21 acres). Government uses such as the main library, the post office, and city hall total only 6% of the land area (approximately 4 acres).

Residential land uses comprise 7% of the subarea (5 acres) including approximately 400 dwelling units. The small acreage and the high number of units indicate small units at a very high density, such as those at the Palomar Hotel (122 units) and the St. George Hotel (100 units).

The gross commercial floor space in the downtown planning area is approximately 2,570,000 square feet, of which approximately 50% exists in the Downtown Core. Of this square footage, approximately 92% is currently being used or occupied by various commercial activities. The remaining 8% falls within various categories of underutilized and unused floor area. It should be noted that floor area in buildings with structural deficiencies accounts for almost 60% of the vacant floor space, with 95% of this category occurring on upper floors in buildings along Pacific Avenue. Thus the downtown has a high occupancy rate and very little vacant space that is not associated with building code deficiencies.

Issues/Objectives

In the Downtown Core subarea, objectives include coordinating future land uses with economic opportunities that exist now and in the future, creating an urban design approach to enhance the overall appearance, attraction, and function of the downtown, improving traffic circulation, addressing social problems in the mall, enhancing the area's cultural and historic resources, and maintaining the integrity of the housing stock within the subarea. Another major objective is determining how much additional parking should be added to respond to increased retail and commercial activities over the next decade.

Map 3 shows principal objectives within the Downtown Core that are specified in the policies and action programs contained in this section of the plan. These include the following:

map 3



- Continue to improve the appearance of the Downtown Core. Address design questions in the Pacific Garden Mall area such as signing, public art, building facades and guidelines for new construction.
- Define the physical limits of the Pacific Garden Mall as well as areas which should have landscaping improvements similar to the mall.
- Develop appropriate secondary level landscaping for lateral streets and provide pedestrian amenities connecting the city hall complex with the San Lorenzo River pedestrian bridge and ultimately to the county government center.
- Improve traffic flow in the Downtown Core through modifications to the existing circulation system.
- Acquire and expand parking facilities in the Downtown Core to respond to increased parking demand over the next decade.
- Maximize utilization of the San Lorenzo River as a public resource through careful application of zoning regulations and design guidelines to development of parcels adjacent to the river.

These planning issues are discussed at length in the Downtown Area Plan Existing Conditions and Issues Identification Report. As previously noted, this document provides in-depth statistics, analyses, and graphic representations of existing conditions and issues within the planning area. Anyone wishing to study the derivation and definition of issues and objectives in the plan should refer to this document.

Policies and Programs For Future Action

The following policies and action programs respond to the issues, problems, and opportunities identified above. Each policy is followed by a specific program (or programs) of action to improve conditions in the Downtown Core.

POLICY: Amend the Garden Mall Overlay regulations and set forth criteria for facades, signs, murals, and other design elements. Utilize existing regulations to ensure compatibility of height, setbacks, and scale so that renovation or new construction matches the existing structures and contributes to the general ambience that characterizes the Pacific Garden Mall. Extend the Garden Mall Overlay District boundaries to include the areas surrounding the Town Clock and the city hall complex.

The City of Santa Cruz Zoning Ordinance currently includes a Garden Mall Overlay District (refer to Map 3). It aims primarily at protection of the architectural heritage of the mall through careful review of proposed demolitions. The purpose of the above zoning ordinance amendment is to further refine signing and design regulations for the downtown area to protect and enhance its special character. In this manner the recommendations in the Pacific Avenue Design Plan will become both more specific and binding. The specific additions to the Garden Mall Overlay District, Section 24.31.030 of the Zoning Ordinance, are described below.

Signs: A design permit would be required for signs with an area greater than 25 square feet. This would allow a review of the majority of signs proposed in the Garden Mall Overlay District, and, on a case-by-case basis, general application of the provisions in the Pacific Avenue Design Plan relating to number, location and types of signs. The specifics to be addressed through the design permit would be individual lettering for signs, locations of signs consistent with the pedestrian scale of the downtown area, and discouragement of fluorescent, psychedelic or sparkled-type colors.

Murals: The public art exception which currently exempts murals from review shall be amended to require a design permit. When reviewing design permits for murals, the following general guidelines should be considered. 1) Public art should be encouraged on sidewalls or blank walls and should be discouraged on building facades which directly face streets or sidewalks. 2) The art should not contain advertising references. 3) Colors for murals should avoid fluorescent colors, sparkle colors, psychedelic colors. 4) If feasible, the art should relate to the pedestrian scale and orientation of the mall, and not present sharp contrasts to the building's architecture and scale.

Window Frames: Mirrored or reflective glass should not be permitted nor should wood shingles or mill-finished anodized aluminum frames.

Facades: Stucco, brick, stone, glazed tile, and wood are encouraged as exterior treatments while materials such as chrome, stainless steel, rusted metal and reflective glass siding should be prohibited.

Color Guidelines: Color guidelines are intended to be advisory in nature and limited in scope. They should specifically focus on discouraging fluorescent colors, sparkle colors, psychedelic colors, as well as strikingly bright purple and orange.

New Construction Guidelines: In addition to the normal design review guidelines, the following additional criteria should be utilized in reviewing buildings within the Garden Mall Overlay District. 1) New buildings should be consistent with neighboring buildings in scale, and vertical or horizontal emphasis of lines and windows. 2) New buildings should face the mall or toward mall areas, not side streets or alleys. 3) Buildings which are off the mall generally should be limited to three stories in height, and setbacks allowed only if they are pedestrian-oriented and contribute to the quality and character of the mall or adjacent streets.

In addition to the design guidelines cited above, provisions of the Garden Mall Overlay District should be extended to the Town Clock area and City Hall complex. This extension will allow for specific review of buildings which are adjacent to these important public facilities.

These changes are aimed at embellishing a unique resource that the City of Santa Cruz possesses--the Pacific Garden Mall and the architectural character of the immediate area. In concert with the economic future of the downtown--a specialty/retail, office, business, entertainment, cultural and dining center for Santa Cruz county--these regulations will continue to preserve and enhance Santa Cruz's inherent advantages over suburban shopping centers in this important market area.

POLICY: In accord with General Plan policy, promote intensification of land uses on the Pacific Garden Mall through establishment of optimum physical boundaries for the mall. These include the Laurel Street area as the southern entryway to the Pacific Garden Mall and extension of formal mall improvements to Cooper Street and ultimately to Soquel Avenue and Cathcart Street between Pacific Avenue and Front Street.

The relocation of the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District center to a site fronting on Pacific Avenue running through to Front Street (south of Cathcart) has relevance to physical definition of the mall. Part of the design for the new center includes public improvements in the Pacific Avenue right-of-way extending the mall treatment from Cathcart to Elm Street. This termination point should be extended as close to the Pacific Avenue/Laurel Street intersection as design and traffic constraints permit.

The basic objective of mall treatment for Pacific Avenue is to create a "special place." Its tree-lined sidewalks and landscaping, coupled with the architectural heritage of the street, create a unique environment. If the mall is extended for too long a distance, the effect is diluted. If extended south of Laurel Street, it would not have the same ambience by virtue of the character of existing development. The scale, height, density, and amount of open space south of Laurel Street do not have the potential to create the same atmosphere that the upper mall possesses.

The remaining question of physical definition of the mall concerns cross streets: Cooper Street, and Soquel and Cathcart between Pacific Avenue and Front Street. Cooper, Soquel and Cathcart are prominent entry points and connecting elements for the mall. Thus, it is appropriate that they receive special design treatment.

In addition, this plan also calls for landscaping improvements on Locust, Church, Walnut, and Lincoln streets as well as Front Street, which, although not part of the mall proper, tie the city hall complex laterally into the Pacific Garden Mall and provide an aesthetic connection between this important complex, the mall, and the county building.

POLICY: In conjunction with physical intensification of the Pacific Garden Mall, encourage economic intensification through extensive promotional activities. On an annual basis, review the city's promotion tax and information programs to ensure the adequacy of promotion of the Pacific Garden Mall.

As previously noted in the economics section, promotion of the downtown business district is highly recommended. This activity is primarily a responsibility of the private sector. There are some contributions, however, that the public sector can

make. As suggested in the economics section, the city could contribute to promotional efforts by providing free parking in the downtown area on Saturday. In addition, the city's promotion tax should be increased to be used to encourage business in the downtown area. The Mall Commission, the Downtown Business Association, and the Chamber of Commerce are all responsible for promotion activities within the Downtown Core. However, in order to be effective, there have to be adequate funds for promotional activities. If there are increases to the transient occupancy tax (the motel/hotel tax) some of this increase could be devoted to mall promotion, which has a distinct beneficial impact on the lodging business within the City of Santa Cruz.

Signing is the last component of a promotion program for the mall. Signs directing people to the mall should be standardized and carried farther toward the city limits along major access routes, providing direction to a greater number of people to the Pacific Garden Mall.

POLICY: To ensure integrity of the Downtown Core subarea, continue to maintain the Pacific Garden Mall in its present excellent physical condition as a Class I Parks and Recreation facility.

The final action program to promote and maintain the Pacific Garden Mall is the city's ongoing and permanent commitment to a maintenance program. This includes daily maintenance obligations, principally in the realm of cleaning the streets and caring for landscaping. The city maintains the trees and flowers that abound on the mall and this plan recommends a continuing budget commitment to carry this responsibility at the Class I maintenance level. In addition, there are other maintenance obligations that occur on a more infrequent basis: physical maintenance of the street and tile work, and other aspects of the infrastructure on the Pacific Garden Mall.

POLICY: Coordinate various public policies for the mall through a general purpose advisory commission. To accomplish this goal, the Pacific Garden Mall Commission and the Parking District #1 Advisory Commission should be merged, and have as their purview both parking and social issues relative to the mall.

Public parking continues to be a crucial issue in the Downtown Core. For the next several years, critical decisions will need to be made concerning parking facilities in the mall area. An on-going commission is the appropriate mechanism to address this important issue.

In addition, the above policy is in response to significant community concern about certain forms of behavior on the mall. The approach to policing the mall should have a community service orientation. That is, providing information to tourists and local residents, creating a positive atmosphere on the mall, and, in conjunction with the promotional activities that should result in greater numbers of the general citizenry being in the mall area, creating a social/peer group atmosphere that will discourage panhandling and other unacceptable forms of activity. Such an approach will help the mall continue as a viable center of business and social intercourse that serves the greater community.

This plan recommends consolidation of the Pacific Garden Mall Commission with the Parking District #1 Advisory Commission in order to deal with physical and social/political issues in a comprehensive manner. Solutions to problems will not be easy. The City of Santa Cruz is perhaps uniquely challenged by such issues because it is both a university town and a resort community known for a wide range of life styles, political viewpoints, and high levels of tolerance. The mall commission has had as one of its principal charges monitoring these issues and attempting, over time, to strike a balance between encouraging consensus community standards of behavior, and at the same time respecting each citizen's civil liberties. A general purpose commission can set the tone for city policies regarding the mall, and develop specific recommendations for parking facilities and other physical considerations.

POLICY: Through traffic management techniques (restriping, meter timing changes, etc.) and selected expansion of parking facilities, increase the parking capacity of the Downtown Core to respond to projected growth in retail and office uses over the next decade.

In the fall of 1982, the city hired a consulting team to develop a conceptual design for a parking structure located on Municipal Parking Lot #2 (behind the PG&E building fronting on Cedar Street). Two concepts being explored are a mixed-use

facility incorporating retail uses on the perimeter of the ground floor, and/or a mixed-use facility involving housing. Restriping of existing municipal facilities (both lots and parking structures) and the creation of a parking structure on Municipal Lot #2 would increase public parking spaces in the upper mall area by approximately 200-300 spaces. Coupled with increased ridership on public transportation, these measures would likely be an adequate response to increased demand over the next decade in this upper portion of the mall.

A second issue involves relocation of the transit center to its Pacific Avenue site between Cathcart and Laurel streets. This will bring large numbers of people to the lower end of the mall, promote intensified land uses in the vicinity, and thus a greater demand for parking. This plan calls for pursuit of acquisition opportunities in the vicinity (although they are limited), and ultimately development of additional parking lots or structures in this general location (including south of Laurel Street).

The steps necessary to develop additional parking include identifying potential sites and obtaining first rights of refusal to purchase if current uses change. In this southern area, three potential sites have been identified (refer to Map 21, Section IV). One is the parcel located at the corner of Front and Cathcart streets, and the second is the triangular area bordered by Front, Laurel, and Spruce streets, south of Laurel Street. This latter location includes some city right-of-way immediately contiguous to the site, which could be combined with the parcel to create a parking facility of significant capacity. The third site is Municipal Lot #5 on Cedar Street which is leased from Calvary Episcopal Church.

The policy stated above does not imply condemnation. These sites would only be pursued on a first right of refusal basis when existing uses ceased to operate (refer to detailed discussion in Section IV, Circulation and Parking/Public Facilities and Services).

It should be noted that the principal purpose of the increased public parking recommended within the planning area is to provide additional spaces for customers. However, it is imperative that through management of public parking resources, parking for employees be provided. Employee and customer parking are inextricably intertwined; there is no solution to one without a solution to the other

This plan recommends creation of a joint mall/parking commission (refer to preceding policy) to address such issues. An early task of the joint commission should be to develop a specific program for the provision of employee parking which does not displace customer parking.

POLICY: Implement changes to the existing circulation system to improve traffic flow in the Downtown Core.

Changing circulation on Front Street between Water and River streets to one-way southbound is the most significant circulation recommendation with the Downtown Core. (This proposal is discussed in detail in Section IV of the plan, Circulation and Parking/Public Facilities and Services.) In addition, four intersections have been identified in the subarea that would benefit from alteration. Specific design improvements for these four intersections are provided in Section IV of the plan. That section contains schematic diagrams showing proposed changes to the intersections and how they relate to overall circulation within the downtown. Following, however, are brief descriptions of the proposed changes at these four intersections.

Front Street/River Street/Cooper Street: Two signals are located along Front Street within 100 feet of each other in this location. The timing sequence of the traffic signals creates problems for pedestrian traffic at Cooper Street because pedestrians may enter the intersection before vehicular traffic has cleared the intersection from the stop light at Front and River streets (just north of the Cooper Street signal and crosswalk). If the segment of Front Street were made one-way between Water Street and the Front and River streets signal, this signal could be eliminated entirely. A scramble system could then be used for pedestrians at the Cooper/Front Street signal, aiding both pedestrian and vehicular movement.

Soquel Avenue/Front Street: With the relocation of the transit center, inbound buses will unload passengers at the northeast corner of Soquel Avenue and Front Street (adjacent to the Long's parking lot). From this point, the buses will proceed to make left turns onto Front Street and then move down the street to the transit center. It is recommended that double left-turn lanes be installed on Soquel entering Front Street since traffic congestion and the turning movement of buses from Soquel Avenue on to Front Street may still create traffic difficulties.

Cedar Street/Center Street/Chestnut Street: This intersection has four legs, Cedar and Chestnut culminating at Center Street. A large triangular configuration results at the center of this intersection. This irregular geometry (and the space at the center of the intersection) does not provide clear direction to motorists. The heavy traffic activity, and proximity to the Center Street/Water Street intersection, compound the problem. A raised island in the center of the intersection and/or pavement markings may provide better guidance--particularly for turning movements--to motorists passing through this intersection.

Cedar Street/Lincoln Street: Pedestrians crossing Cedar Street on the south side of the intersection are sometimes confused by the potential path of vehicles on Cedar. This results from the unusual width of Cedar Street on the south side of the intersection. The recommended improvement is the installation of an island (or islands) on the southwest corner of the intersection reducing the crossing distance for pedestrians and providing more direction to the vehicles southbound on Cedar Street.

POLICY: Development along the San Lorenzo River should be encouraged to take advantage of proximity and views in both new construction and renovation. Design of these developments should make use of the intrinsic appeal of river-oriented sites.

The San Lorenzo River is one of the major opportunity sites within the downtown. Enhancement of this public resource--upgrading flood control, and its usability as a remarkable aesthetic and recreational attribute in the city--is covered in Sections IV and V of the plan. The policy cited above pertains principally to the reuse or modification of existing facilities that front on the San Lorenzo River. This is particularly the case with those parcels located on Front Street between Soquel Avenue and Laurel Street. The second levels of structures in these locations have a view of both the river and the panorama of the Santa Cruz skyline and would be desirable locations for restaurants and other uses that benefit from the public appeal of interesting vistas. The city's design review procedures are the mechanism for implementing this policy.

POLICY: Continue to enhance the cultural and historic attributes of the Downtown Core, building upon the existing inventory of architectural, artistic and cultural resources.

The cultural facilities in the downtown draw people to the area along with the specialty retail shops and the ambience and architecture of the Pacific Garden Mall. These cultural and historic qualities should be encouraged. Specifically, any future use of the county's detention center (the Front Street Jail) should include museum space and art space as part of the development plan.

POLICY: Encourage maintenance of the existing housing stock within the Downtown Core through the city's housing rehabilitation program. Support efforts to develop housing within the subarea.

As described in the Downtown Area Plan Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report, the Downtown Core subarea has very little potential for residential expansion. There is only one acre of vacant land within the subarea, and the existing zoning designations are for commercial uses. Residential land uses currently make up approximately 5 acres or 7% of the subarea, with total dwelling units numbering 399. The small acreage and the high number of units indicate small units at a very high density, such as those at the Palomar Hotel (122 units) and the St. George Hotel (100 units). Thus, in the Downtown Core, unlike the Downtown Neighborhood subarea and the Mission Hill subarea, housing is not a primary issue and the options are limited. However, the policy stated above is intended to encourage maintaining existing housing units as a viable resource and recognizing the desirability of additional dwelling units within the Downtown Core.

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

The Downtown Neighborhood subarea is the largest residential enclave within the Downtown Area Plan boundaries. Despite the age of the housing stock (the majority of the dwelling units were built prior to 1936), this subarea is a very viable residential neighborhood. Much housing rehabilitation has taken place in the private sector within the last ten years. In addition, much of the Downtown Neighborhood has been placed in an historic district to ensure preservation of its rich architectural heritage.

Analysis of the area indicates that the Downtown Neighborhood has essentially reached its capacity in terms of housing density. The development pattern within the neighborhood is well established, and no major changes in character are envisioned. Thus, through planning, traffic amelioration and other management techniques, the thrust and direction of city policies are to ensure that the neighborhood continues to serve as a valuable housing resource for a variety of people, and also serves as a complement and source of economic support for the downtown commercial area.

Overview

Map 4 shows the boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood. The subarea contains approximately 93 acres, nearly two-thirds of which is devoted to residential use. There are approximately 600 dwelling units in the neighborhood, the majority being single-family and duplex dwellings.

With minor exceptions, most commercial uses are located on the eastern edge of the subarea along Center and Cedar streets (adjacent to the Downtown Core subarea). Service and retail land uses compose less than 10% of the total land uses in the subarea. It should be noted that the services uses are generally of either an office type or of a public service nature such as the Boy's Club, YWCA, or the Red Cross.

Public and quasi-public uses, the other main land use category in the subarea, represent 29 acres or approximately 31% of the land area. This category includes

downtown
neighborhood
subarea



map 4

four major uses: the City of Santa Cruz offices, the Pacific Telephone Company (quasi-public), Santa Cruz High School, and the Loudon Nelson Community Center.

One area (less than 1%) of land in the subarea is vacant. An analysis of these vacant parcels indicates that they average 4500 square feet per lot. This represents limited possibilities for development--probably no more than 10 additional dwelling units.

In terms of demography, the Downtown Neighborhood subarea is one of the most diverse within the city. It contains significant numbers of children (family households), and balanced representation in the young adult, middle-age, and 65+ age categories. Thus, the Downtown Neighborhood includes a range of residents, providing housing opportunities for a wide spectrum of the city's population.

Issues/Objectives

Within the Downtown Neighborhood, objectives of the plan fall into three general categories. The first of these, protecting the neighborhood, deals primarily with mitigating the impacts of automobile travel on residential streets, and with the related topic of parking.

A second general category deals with amenities. This includes use of the high school grounds for additional public recreation, expansion of the Rincon triangle into a park facility, possible utilization of the YWCA site as a tot-lot, and the addition of landscaping and beautification treatments on neighborhood streets (apart from traffic control devices).

The final category is housing. Discussion here includes incentives for housing rehabilitation (historic district tax investment credits), application of the city's housing rehabilitation program to eligible structures, and the prevention of commercial conversions (that is, converting residences to commercial uses where current zoning permits).

Map 5 shows objectives within the Downtown Neighborhood which are specified in the policies and action programs contained in this section of the plan. These include the following:

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS & IMPROVEMENTS



- Remove tourist traffic from the neighborhood by eliminating Chestnut Street as a designated coastal access route.
- Enhance residential quality and neighborhood safety through installation of traffic control devices along the length of Chestnut Street .
- Address parking deficiencies in the Downtown Neighborhood. Develop and apply parking management strategies within the subarea.
- Upgrade the livability of neighborhood streets through the implementation of selected traffic management devices.
- Augment existing park/open space facilities within the Downtown Neighborhood.
- Preserve housing units and avoid further commercial conversions (and accompanying parking problems) by rezoning certain parcels from commercial to residential designations.

Policies and Programs for Future Action

The following policies and action programs respond to the issues, problems, and opportunities that were initially identified in the Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report. Each policy is followed by a specific program (or programs) to improve conditions within the Downtown Neighborhood subarea.

POLICY: In recognition of the residential nature of Chestnut Street, delete Chestnut Street as a designated coastal access route. Add River Street/Front Street as a coastal access route within the City of Santa Cruz. Change street signing to reflect this policy decision.

Existing traffic counts demonstrate that Chestnut Street does not really function as a coastal access route (despite existing signing). Seven-day traffic counts taken in the months of April and July, 1982, demonstrated that weekday counts are higher than Saturday and Sunday traffic counts. Therefore, the street serves primarily local residents rather than tourists seeking a route to the beach, wharf, and Boardwalk complex.

River Street/Front Street is the most viable alternative between Ocean Street and Bay Street, other designated coastal access routes. This route has a number of

advantages. It is direct, uses commercial streets, and brings visitor traffic through the Downtown Core.

POLICY: Install a series of traffic management improvements along the length of Chestnut Street to facilitate traffic safety, and to enhance the residential environment.

To decrease the speed of traffic coming down the two lanes of Chestnut Street Extension, and to eliminate the dangerous and unexpected merging of traffic to one lane at the bottom of the hill (between Locust and Church streets), the center divider of Chestnut Street should be realigned to require traffic to merge into one lane before reaching the bottom of the hill. In addition, an entryway at the foot of Chestnut Extension (located in the Rincon triangle) is recommended. This would be a visual device with some vertical design element indicating to motorists that they have left a high speed freeway environment and have entered a residential neighborhood.

Further down Chestnut Street, existing stop signs located at the Walnut Street intersection should be augmented by residential traffic islands (refer to Map 20, Section IV). Such curb islands protect parallel parking along both sides of the street and contribute to the slowing of traffic by visually narrowing the roadway.

Finally, at the lower end of Chestnut as it approaches Laurel Street, a street tree program should be implemented. This would again narrow the roadway, providing a psychological as well as physical impediment to greater speeds while providing beautification improvements consistent with the residential uses along the street. In combination, these modifications should improve traffic safety, and enhance both the pedestrian environment and neighborhood character along Chestnut Street.

Over the last few years a number of proposals have been made for various traffic improvements at the Chestnut/Laurel Street intersection. These proposals have been based on perceived traffic problems at the intersection, including accidents. In turn, neighborhood residents have been concerned that any improvements at this intersection (particularly a signal) would lead to increased traffic, and might, in the long-term, create more safety problems than are solved. Discussions during

the planning process failed to result in specific recommendations for this intersection. As conditions change through time, the community may conclude that modifications to this intersection are necessary or desirable.

POLICY: In response to the need for parking in the Downtown Neighborhood, initiate a time limit parking program on selected neighborhood streets as a pilot project.

The Livable Streets Study recommends preferential parking on streets around the city hall area, particularly on Chestnut Street south of Church, and on Lincoln and Walnut streets. At the same time, the Downtown Parking Plan, by J.H. K. and Associates, recommends against instituting preferential parking in this area, stating that it would simply displace cars further south toward Laurel Street in the residential neighborhood. This topic has been discussed at length by interested citizens, city staff, and relevant committees. The parking subcommittee of the Downtown Area Plan Task Force addressed this topic and has recommended a pilot project to test the viability of time limit parking.

As shown on Map 6, the program designates selected 2-hour parking spaces scattered throughout the neighborhood. These 2-hour spaces are intended to provide turn-over parking for residents in the downtown neighborhood. If a resident is already parked on the street in the morning (having left the car there overnight), and then leaves to do shopping, returning some time later, frequently no parking spaces are available due to commercial parking intrusion. With the 2-hour parking zones, which would not serve downtown employees, it is likely that there would be some opportunity to regain a parking space in the immediate vicinity of one's home. This would necessitate moving the car within two hours, but at a later time there may well be additional available spaces (refer to expanded discussion in Section IV).

A second pilot program is recommended in the area of the Rincon Street triangle. Map 7 shows a proposed redesign of the triangle area to create a park-like facility (discussed further under Recreation Facilities, Section IV). This design includes a realignment of essentially the same number of parking spaces that exist in the area at the present time. The pilot program envisions having permit parking available either to residents in the immediate vicinity (the newly refurbished Hinds House

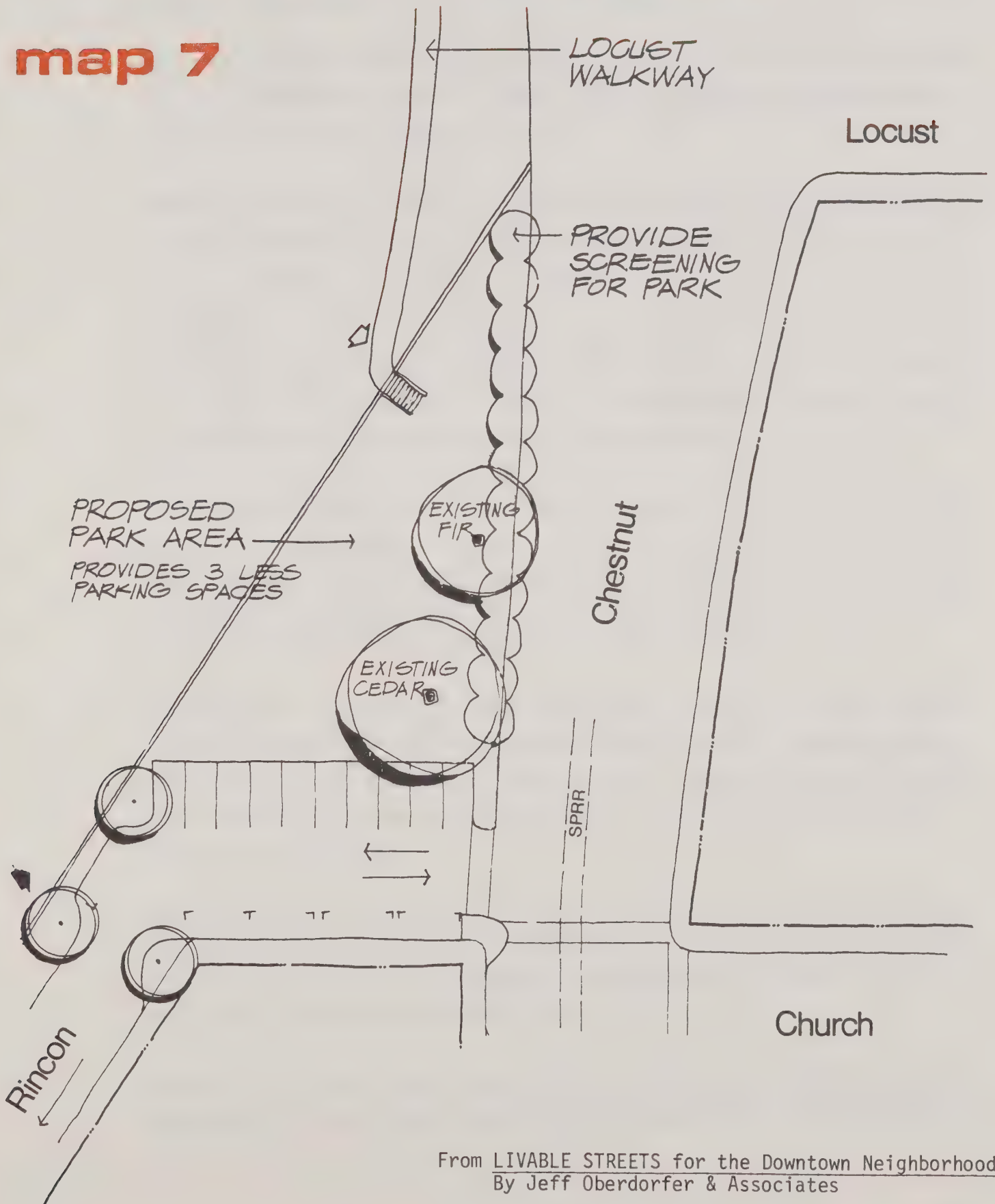
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING PROGRAM

map 6



RINCON ST. TRIANGLE

map 7



is a rental facility with 10 rooms and no off-street parking), or to local employees. Again, an evaluation of the costs and benefits of this pilot project would determine whether it should be continued, expanded, or dropped.

POLICY: Install selected traffic management devices on various Downtown Neighborhood streets for safety, amenity, neighborhood identity and the improvement of traffic flow.

Improving area-wide circulation and enhancing the local residential environment are two objectives of this area plan. Circulation improvements in the commercial area are intended to help improve the overall downtown circulation flow. These improvements include modification of the intersection of Cedar/Center/Chestnut streets as well as the North Pacific/River Street intersection and the Water Street intersection adjacent to the main Post Office. These improvements are designed to maximize use of existing main streets, possibly preventing diversions into the neighborhoods due to increasingly heavy traffic congestion.

To complement these improvements, several changes are suggested within the Downtown Neighborhood. In the western part of the neighborhood, to promote safety and increase the ease of access on Towne Terrace, parking should be removed at the southern end of the street for a depth of three or four parcels to allow turn around and emergency equipment access on that street.

As previously noted, Chestnut Street should be treated as an entire system including modification of traffic flow on the Chestnut Street Extension hill, design changes at the foot of Chestnut Street Extension, modifications to the middle portion of the street, and beautification of the southern end of the street as it approaches Laurel Street.

An intersection that should be modified to increase safety and aesthetics is the Green Street/Chestnut Street/Union Street confluence. Better definition, through the use of islands or a "T" configuration, would prevent the traffic free-for-all that occurs in this area at the present time.

Finally, in the Walnut Street area, neck-down devices at the intersection with Chestnut and in other locations along Walnut are appropriate traffic improvements

that also emphasize this unique residential area. The City Council has approved a set of these traffic islands for installation in early 1983 (refer to discussion and Map 20 in Section IV).

Other improvements of lower priority would be changes in the Taylor and Myrtle streets area. After the installation of the previously mentioned traffic management devices, it may be appropriate at a later date to install chokers or neck-down devices in this residential area.

POLICY: In cooperation with the city school system, encourage further public use of the Santa Cruz High School playfields.

Open space in the Downtown Neighborhood subarea is scarce. At the present time, only the park adjacent to Loudon Nelson Center (Laurel Park) provides public open space. The uses envisioned at the high school are passive and low key. Basically, open space would be provided for frisbee throwing, sitting on the grass, children running and playing, and unorganized activities of this kind. The hours of activity would have to be limited to those outside the normal school day (8-2:30) during the school year. In the summertime, the field could be available throughout the day.

POLICY: Utilize existing opportunity sites to provide additional amenities within the Downtown Neighborhood subarea.

In conjunction with the improvements at the foot of the Chestnut Street Extension (the intersection of Chestnut Street and Locust Street), the Rincon triangle could be modified to provide additional turf area. This site provides one of the few opportunities to create more open space in the Downtown Neighborhood subarea, which is lacking in these facilities relative to the density and size of the area.

In addition, this policy permits working with the YWCA to utilize their existing playground for a joint city-wide tot-lot facility. The Downtown Neighborhood has a large number of small children in a high-density residential area and such a lot would serve as a convenient location on a lease or sale basis to provide additional recreation facilities within the immediate vicinity.

POLICY: Stabilize residential uses in the Downtown Neighborhood subarea and prevent commercial intrusion by selective rezoning of properties on the boundaries of the subarea.

The area currently zoned Community Commercial on the southwest corner of Laural Street and Cedar Street should be rezoned to a residential designation in order to stabilize the residential character of the homes and to prevent further commercial development in this area, which is already severely impacted by parking deficiencies. This rezoning would affect the three parcels on the corner fronting on Laurel Street.

POLICY: Conserve the existing housing stock through emphasis on city rehabilitation programs, encouragement of private sector rehabilitation (tax investment credits), coupled with maintenance of existing density standards to prevent further development which could lead to overcrowding or parking-related problems.

Two hundred and ten dwelling units have been rehabilitated in the city since 1975 under the city's Unified Housing Rehabilitation Program. Thirty-seven units have been rehabilitated in the downtown area. Given the age of the housing stock in the Downtown Neighborhood subarea, the Unified Housing Rehabilitation Program continues to be of importance.

In the private sector, the city is currently pursuing having the Historic Overlay District certified at the state and national levels so that owners of properties who engage in significant rehabilitation are entitled to investment tax credits. This should provide additional incentives to the private sector to rehabilitate the housing stock within the Downtown Neighborhood.

A final issue concerns rezoning the western section of the Downtown Neighborhood subarea, those properties located west of the high school, from their current R-L designation to the R-1-5 designation. The General Plan indicates rezoning to maintain the character of the existing neighborhood and to prevent further parking and related density problems. It is unlikely such a rezoning would limit additional housing potential due to the lack of vacant land in the area.

MISSION HILL

The Mission Hill subarea is both a residential neighborhood and an historic district. It is so designated on the General Plan Land Use Map, and it is implemented through the city Zoning Ordinance (Single-Family Residence District and Historic Overlay District). Many of the structures in the subarea are in the city's Historic Building Survey, and the general character of Mission Hill is that of a Victorian residential neighborhood.

Overview

Map 8 shows the boundaries of the Mission Hill subarea. It contains approximately 23 acres, with residential uses (115 dwellings) making up the major land use category. One-third of the subarea (7.2 acres) is dedicated to public or quasi-public uses, some of which have been in the area since its very beginnings.

The area contains two public facilities of both architectural and historic significance. Holy Cross Church and the related school and ancillary buildings are located on the bluff of Mission Hill; the spire of the church is visible throughout Santa Cruz as a primary architectural landmark. The Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park (Neary-Rodriguez Adobe) is also located just off Mission Plaza; it is the historic link with Mission Santa Cruz established on Mission Hill in 1791.

A small number of retail and service/commercial uses exist on the southern edge of the Mission Hill subarea (along Mission Street leading to the Town Clock). These businesses relate more to the Downtown Core, and they are somewhat buffered from the residential uses by the bluff edge of Mission Hill.

There is essentially no vacant land in the subarea; the housing stock is sound but of advanced age, with many homes dating from the Victorian era. Thus the Mission Hill subarea is an established residential neighborhood including a significant amount of space devoted to public and quasi-public uses, with a small fringe area of commercial activity that is physically separated from the residential uses and the church/adobe complex.

**mission
hill
subarea**



map 8

Issues/Objectives

Within the Mission Hill subarea, objectives of the plan fall into two primary categories. First is the preservation of the residential character and quality of the neighborhood. Second is appropriate development (and future use) of both the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park and the Holy Cross Church complex so as to mitigate impacts on the adjacent residential uses.

Map 9 shows objectives within the Mission Hill subarea that are specified in the policies and action programs contained in this section of the plan. These include the following:

- Maintain the historic character of Mission Hill. Review new development to make sure its location and height does not detract visually from Holy Cross Church, the area's prominent architectural landmark.
- Maintain the open playfield area behind Holy Cross Church to serve as a recreation resource for Holy Cross Elementary School, and any possible future uses of the Holy Cross High School building.
- Specify that uses of the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park be of medium-intensity; provide adequate parking for the facility.
- Develop a walkway system connecting the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park to Scope Park, the Town Clock and the Pacific Garden Mall.
- Provide parking opportunities for residential and public uses through instituting two-hour parking in selected locations on neighborhood streets.

Policies and Programs for Future Action

The Downtown Area Plan Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report lists issues, problems, and opportunities in the Mission Hill subarea. The following policies and action programs are intended to respond to these topics and ultimately to improve conditions within the Mission Hill subarea.

map 9



POLICY: Maintain the historic residential character of the Mission Hill subarea through consistent application of the existing Historic Overlay District regulations. Limit the height of both renovation and new development to two stories or 22 feet, and maintain view corridors of Holy Cross Church, the area's prominent architectural landmark.

The Holy Cross Church building is visible from many areas of the City of Santa Cruz. It stands atop the hill as one of the city's most visual architectural landmarks. Additional construction or renovation in the Mission Hill subarea should not obscure views of this structure. In addition, the application of the existing historic overlay regulations and the height limitations suggested in this policy will continue to preserve the flavor and character of the Mission Hill subarea, one of the city's most architecturally distinguished areas.

POLICY: Maintain the open playfield area behind the Holy Cross Church to serve as a recreation resource for the Holy Cross Elementary School, and any possible future uses of the Holy Cross High School building.

The playfield behind Holy Cross Church serves as a recreation resource for Holy Cross Elementary School and various other recreation/athletic activities. Soccer is played on the field (club and youth soccer leagues) and a variety of formal school activities are also conducted there.

The possibility of Holy Cross High School being reactivated is remote, but the athletic field should be kept in open space to provide for that possibility as well as for other potential uses of the building that would benefit from or require outside recreation and/or parking space.

POLICY: Designate the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park for medium intensity uses. Discourage commercial uses that would generate traffic, hours of service, or other conflicts with the adjacent residential neighborhood.

The state is currently conducting a site utilization study pertaining to the history and prehistory of the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park. The policy cited above is not intended to preclude appropriate commercial activity on the site, such as the selling of postcards, books, or other materials related to the history of

Mission Santa Cruz and the adobe. The statement discouraging commercial uses applies to a restaurant or other such activity that would be a heavy generator of traffic, and, potentially, involve hours of service that would be viewed negatively by local residents.

POLICY: Acquire properties for parking and for additional public activities in support of the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park. This area should be connected by a path or appropriate walkway to Scope Park, the Town Clock, and the Pacific Garden Mall.

Increased parking in the immediate area is the most likely negative impact of development of the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park. Some parking is available during the week on the Holy Cross Church site, but this is private property (often full on weekends and various other times when church activities take place). There are some small parcels adjacent to the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park which could be acquired to provide additional parking. In addition, a pathway should be incorporated in this area to connect the Mission Hill complex, including the the Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park to Scope Park, the Town Clock, and the Pacific Garden Mall. This would provide direct pedestrian access to the facilities on Mission Hill, sites of historical and architectural significance.

POLICY: Institute two-hour parking on portions of Green Street and on Mission Plaza.

This parking is part of a system in the downtown residential neighborhoods intended to supply parking opportunities for residents and for special uses located in residential areas. The Downtown Neighborhood subarea and the Mission Hill subarea are both impacted by employee parking. Two-hour spaces will discourage all-day employee parking and provide turnover opportunities for residents. Three twenty-four minute spaces opposite Holy Cross Elementary School will provide opportunities for those having business at the school. The locations of these spaces are shown on Map 6. (For further information on this system, refer to discussions in the Downtown Neighborhood subarea and Section IV, Circulation and Parking/Public Facilities and Services.)

SOUTH PACIFIC AVENUE

There are two primary land uses in the South Pacific Avenue subarea that define its role within the city. A significant number of dwelling units exist in the subarea (over 200), and many of the automobile dealerships within the City of Santa Cruz are located in this area. The General Plan calls for retention of housing units throughout the city as well as retention of automobile dealerships within the city limits. Encouraging dealerships, while simultaneously reducing impacts on adjacent residential uses, constitutes one of the major challenges in this area.

Overview

The South Pacific Avenue subarea encompasses approximately 25 acres (refer to Map 10). Residential uses make up 35% of the area (9 acres). There are 206 dwelling units within the subarea, clustered in three main locations. The distribution between unit types is fairly even, with single-family dwellings taking up the majority of the land area devoted to housing.

Nearly 50% of the subarea is in retail activities, with auto dealers and associated uses predominating (there are 49 individual businesses). Seven percent of the land in the subarea is in public or quasi-public uses, principally private parking. Another 7% of the land in the area is vacant. This vacant space is principally in 3 major parcels.

Issues/Objectives

The area south of Laurel Street has been zoned Thoroughfare Commercial since the 1960's. Current General Plan land use policies indicate a mixture of multi-family residential uses and community commercial uses coinciding generally with existing land use patterns. Part of the area was rezoned to R-L, multiple-residential, in 1982. However, other residential uses have continued in spite of the Thoroughfare Commercial zoning. This presents a land use issue within the subarea: accommodating residential uses in accordance with General Plan designations and appropriate zoning classifications.

**south
pacific
avenue
subarea**



map 10

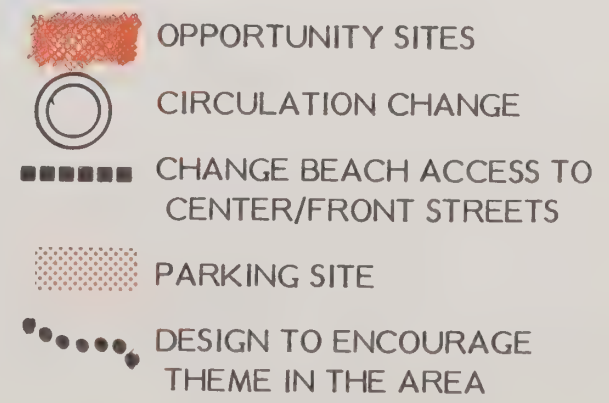
A key planning issue concerns the future of the auto dealers within the area and their impact on adjacent residential uses. Compatibility between commercial and residential uses may be achieved by physical improvements to the dealership shopping areas which also provide relief (buffering, etc.) to the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

A final land use issue concerns properties at the southern end of the subarea. This vicinity is a key link between the beach area and the downtown and could be made more attractive and functional. Suggested land uses for these sites are included within this section of the plan.

Map II shows objectives within the South Pacific Avenue subarea that are specified in the policies and action programs contained in this section of the plan. These include the following:

- Provide efficient access to and through the area, primarily by making it easier to reach the beach/wharf area and the downtown.
- Maintain viable commercial and residential areas and develop a basis for coexistence of these uses.
- To relieve parking impacts on the residential neighborhood, develop additional public parking in this subarea as well as in the Downtown Core.
- Develop design guidelines, including signing, to encourage a theme in the subarea. In terms of the commercial uses in the area, the theme would be that of an auto center and related automotive services.
- Encourage appropriate land uses on opportunity sites within the subarea. These include the vacant parcel at the intersection of Washington and Center streets, a parcel on Pacific Avenue (near Center Street), and the site at the intersection of Pacific Avenue and Front Street.

map 11



Policies and Programs for Future Action

Issues, problems, and opportunities within the South Pacific Avenue subarea were initially identified in the Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report. Following are policies and action programs that respond to each of the conditions identified within the subarea.

POLICY: In recognition of the residential nature of Washington Street, designate Front Street/River Street as a coastal access route rather than Chestnut Street/Washington Street.

In the Downtown Neighborhood section of the plan, River Street/Front Street has been substituted as the coastal access route in this segment of the city rather than Chestnut Street/Washington Street. That policy recognizes the advantages of routing traffic through a commercial area rather than through a residential area along a route which is direct and passes through the Downtown Core.

POLICY: As part of the city's overall circulation system, change the flow of traffic at the intersection of Pacific Avenue and Front Street.

As previously noted, River Street/Front Street has been substituted for Chestnut/Washington as a designated coastal access route. To facilitate this change and to improve the safety of the Pacific Avenue/Front Street intersection, Pacific Avenue should have a stop sign and give way to traffic on Front Street. In addition, the segment of Front Street that runs downhill to the intersection should become one-way downhill, no longer allowing turning movements into this street from the intersection. A schematic of the intersection improvement is shown in Section IV, Circulation and Parking/Public Facilities and Services.

POLICY: Seek first right of refusal to acquire the parcel bounded by Front Street, Laurel Street, and Spruce Street for additional public parking.

This site could provide a very significant parking resource when combined with the city's existing right-of-way (adjacent to the parcel toward the San Lorenzo River). This site would help alleviate parking deficiencies that exist in the South Pacific Avenue subarea, would provide additional parking for commercial activities in the

subarea, and also would contribute to easing the parking problems that exist on the northern side of Laurel Street in the Downtown Core subarea.

POLICY: Develop and adopt design guidelines to encourage an auto center theme within the subarea. Include in the guidelines measures to protect adjacent residential uses.

The General Plan specifically recommends retention of automobile dealerships within the City of Santa Cruz. This suggests that the city should work with dealers to improve conditions where the dealerships are located. Design guidelines, including signing, thematic paving treatments, entryway markers, etc., are all possible techniques to create an auto center theme in the area. This is essentially a private sector activity that the city pledges to support in cooperation with the auto dealers.

Mitigation measures in the design guidelines would include the elimination of outside loud speakers at the dealerships, and focusing all promotional lighting toward the merchandise and the center of the site rather than outward toward adjacent residential areas.

POLICY: Adopt statements of preferred land uses and design guidelines for the major opportunity sites within the subarea. These are located at the corner of Washington and Center streets, on Pacific Avenue near Center Street, and at the intersection of Pacific Avenue and Front Street.

During the latter part of 1982, the vacant parcel located at the intersection of Washington and Center streets was recommended as a possible housing site by the City Council. Through existing design review procedures, a multiple residential housing project could be constructed which would be an asset to the area. It would provide a needed housing resource within the City of Santa Cruz, and be consistent with the two principal land uses in the area, housing and auto dealerships. Auto-related or visitor-serving uses would also be appropriate for the site.

A second opportunity site, located at the intersection of Pacific Avenue and Front Street, has traditionally been occupied by an automobile dealership. At the present

time, an open air market has been approved as a use for the site. This is essentially an interim use. The preferred long-term land use for this site is an auto dealership. It is in a very accessible location, highly visible to the buying public, and it is in the heart of the existing auto dealership area. This development would obviously be a function of the private sector, but the city, through its adopted design guidelines for the area and policy of retaining and encouraging auto dealerships, would view with favor the redevelopment of the site as an auto dealership or a significant auto-related use.

A third significant site is located on lower Pacific Avenue near the Center Street intersection. This large parcel (approximately 25,000 sq.ft.) currently is occupied by a small structure fronting the street. Upon reuse, the site is large enough for either a multiple housing development, a major auto-related use, or possibly a visitor-serving use such as a motel. These alternatives would be preferred to a non-related commercial use.

Finally, although not within the Downtown Area Plan boundaries, the city-owned Neary's Lagoon site presents a challenging opportunity to create a mix of housing types including a range of housing costs. Components of this project could include housing development, renovation of the vacant and substandard commercial buildings nearby, and completion of the Neary's Lagoon Wildlife Sanctuary. This project would be a cooperative venture to encourage not only public but private investment which would provide housing and improve the existing neighborhood. The project should be pursued in the near future to ensure maximum eligibility for federal funding and private investment.

NORTH RIVER STREET SUBAREA

In recent years, the North River Street area has become recognized as a section of the city with great promise. The main arterial, River Street, is one of the primary entryways into the city; in fact, it is the shortest and most direct route to the heart of the city.

In the past, the potential of the area was not appreciated. The zoning that has been in force for many years, C-H, Heavy Commercial, identified North River Street as a place for storage yards, warehouses, and other non-retail uses.

The policies in this section of the plan significantly alter this designation. Working realistically with the constraints in the area--parcel size and configuration, existing heavy commercial uses, building design, and traffic difficulties--the plan puts forth policies and programs to help realize North River Street's inherent potential. The plan envisions the subarea's future as a dynamic office and retail area, close to the central business district, including attractive housing opportunities, all centered around an upgraded River Street--a functional and aesthetically pleasing entryway to the City of Santa Cruz.

Overview

The North River Street area contains the largest amount of vacant land in the downtown and therefore has the most potential for new commercial and residential development. As noted, this subarea has long been underutilized. Existing land uses include contractor's yards, warehouses, automotive services, and a mixture of older residential structures in addition to the newer retail and office uses.

The more recent development pattern within the North River Street subarea indicates that commercial uses, particularly fronting on River Street, are taking advantage of the high traffic counts, visibility, and commercial potential of the area. The policies and action programs listed in this section of the plan are intended to provide land use guidelines for the area to upgrade and maximize the attributes of North River Street, to provide design guidelines relative to the appearance of the area, to improve circulation, and to rationalize some of the contradictions between existing land uses, existing zoning, the designations set

forth in the City of Santa Cruz General Plan, and the realities of parcel size and configuration.

Map 12 shows the boundaries of the North River Street subarea. It encompasses approximately 56 acres, with one-quarter of the area (14 acres) devoted to residential land uses. There are 162 dwelling units; the largest residential concentration is the mobile home park at the end of North Pacific Avenue. This park provides 95 units of low-moderate income housing on approximately 4.5 acres of land, a density of 21 units per acre. The remaining residential uses in the subarea are predominantly single-family (32 units on 9.5 acres), a lower residential density than is designated in the General Plan. (There are an additional 35 multiple-residential units in the subarea, again at densities less than that called for in the General Plan.)

A major portion of the subarea (40%; 22 acres) is devoted to land uses in a combination of manufacturing/retail commercial/ service uses. The distribution between these three types of land uses is roughly even.

Approximately 17% of the subarea (9.5 acres) is devoted to public facilities uses. The main concentration consists of parcels of open space around the river levee and various parking facilities scattered throughout the subarea.

Approximately 19% (10.6 acres) of land is currently vacant. These vacant parcels are designated in the General Plan for residential use along the San Lorenzo River, and service/commercial uses along River Street. The state-owned parcel north of Josephine Street and adjacent public vacant parcels account for about 4 acres.

The state site is critical to development north of Josephine Street as both an accessway to surrounding parcels and a source of rear access for those parcels fronting on River Street.

north
river
street
subarea



Issues/Objectives

Within the North River Street area, objectives of the plan fall into three general categories. The first of these pertains to land use designations and subsequent zoning. The majority of the North River Street area is currently zoned C-H, Heavy Commercial, a designation that no longer suits the existing development pattern, nor the likely best uses of the area in the future. Thus four zoning designations are recommended for the North River Street subarea: IL-R, Industrial Laboratory and Research; R-M, Multiple Residence-Medium Rise; C-T, Thoroughfare Commercial; and C-C, Community Commercial (refer to Map 17).

The second general issue is that of circulation. River Street has become characterized by high traffic counts and congestion; it is one of the major entryways into the city. The various policies and programs that are articulated in this section of the plan are intended to improve traffic conditions on River Street now and in the future.

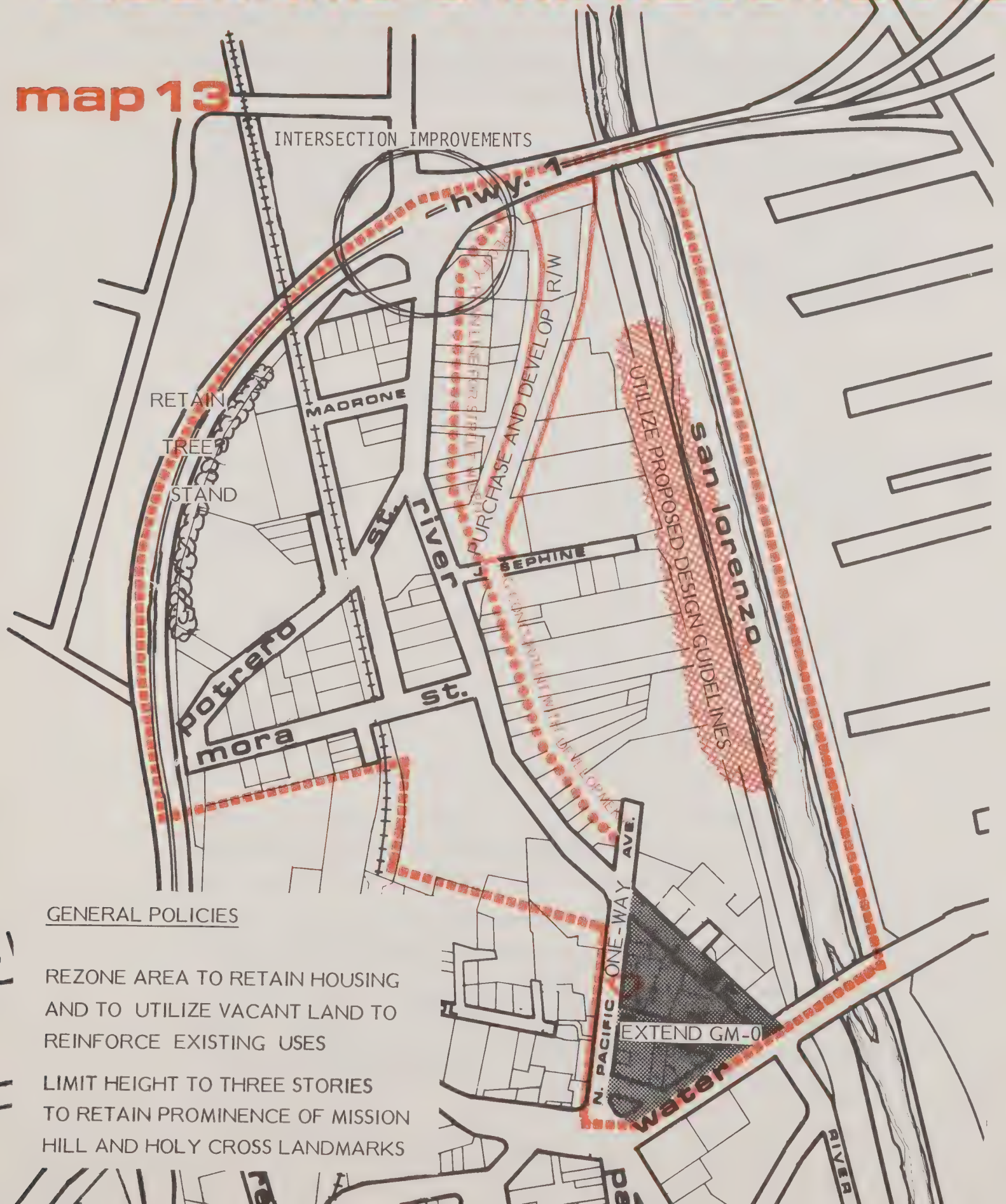
Finally, design questions are discussed in this section of the plan, with the express intent of producing design regulations for North River Street that are not too proscriptive, but which provide some artistic and aesthetic guidelines for this multi-use area.

Map 13 shows objectives within the North River Street subarea that are specified in the policies and action programs contained in this section of the plan. These include:

- Reinforce recent commercial and residential trends and allow options for additional mixing of light research and office uses to take advantage of North River Street's inherent potential.
- Reinforce the existing El Rio Mobile Home Park and adjacent vacant sites for residential use through rezoning. The existing residential enclave in the Potrero/Mora streets area would also be designated residential.
- Recognize the River Street/Water Street/North Pacific Avenue triangle as a contiguous architectural and land use area related to the Pacific Garden Mall.

NORTH RIVER ST. PROGRAMS & IMPROVEMENTS

map 13



INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

hwy. 1

RETAIN
TREES
STAND

MAORONE

st. river

PURCHASE AND DEVELOP R/W

SEPHINE

UTILIZE PROPOSED DESIGN GUIDELINES

san lorenzo

potrero
mora

st.

GENERAL POLICIES

REZONE AREA TO RETAIN HOUSING
AND TO UTILIZE VACANT LAND TO
REINFORCE EXISTING USES

LIMIT HEIGHT TO THREE STORIES
TO RETAIN PROMINENCE OF MISSION
HILL AND HOLY CROSS LANDMARKS

N. PACIFIC ONE-WAY AVE.

EXTEND GM-0

water

RIVER

- Improve the traffic circulation system throughout the North River Street subarea.
- Implement the Zoning Ordinance setback relative to new construction and renovation of existing structures to provide for future widening of River Street.
- Acquire the state parcel that parallels River Street (north of Josephine Street) and develop a roadway in this location.
- Provide pedestrian access through private properties to the San Lorenzo River levee system. Encourage siting of buildings and general building design to be oriented toward the river, for access to the river and to take advantage of views.

Policies and Programs for Future Action

The following policies and action programs respond to the issues, problems, and opportunities that were initially identified in the Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report. Each policy is followed by a specific program (or programs) to improve conditions within the North River Street subarea.

Two factors influence land use decisions for this area--past policy regarding residential uses along the river and the obsolescence of the existing C-H, Heavy Commercial, zoning designation. The 1980 General Plan designated a linear strip along the San Lorenzo River between Highway I and Water Street for residential use. The Downtown Area Plan alters this configuration and concentrates residential uses south of Josephine Street for the following reasons:

- Existing improvements near and north of Josephine Street make residential development problematic, while residential uses already exist to the south and represent a core for future residential development.
- Subdivision patterns are such that the General Plan places a number of parcels in two use designations; this makes site development difficult.
- Current General Plan designations leave strip commercial uses along River Street. Such development may interfere with efficient traffic flow on this arterial. Inward-focused residential development would not present this problem.

- The reconfigured residential area is adjacent to other residential areas and is in close proximity to services and amenities. Such locational advantages dissipate quickly as areas further north of Josephine are considered for residential use.

As noted, the designations in the General Plan (Map 14), present two problems in terms of current land use controls. First, it is very difficult to split uses on existing parcels, i.e. commercial uses in the front and residential to the rear. The second problem is that the General Plan designations conflict with existing land uses--both north and south of Josephine Street. The following policy attempts to rationalize these differences.

POLICY: Amend the General Plan and rezone the North River Street subarea to designations which emphasize recent land use trends and which encourage more appropriate uses in the area now and in the future.

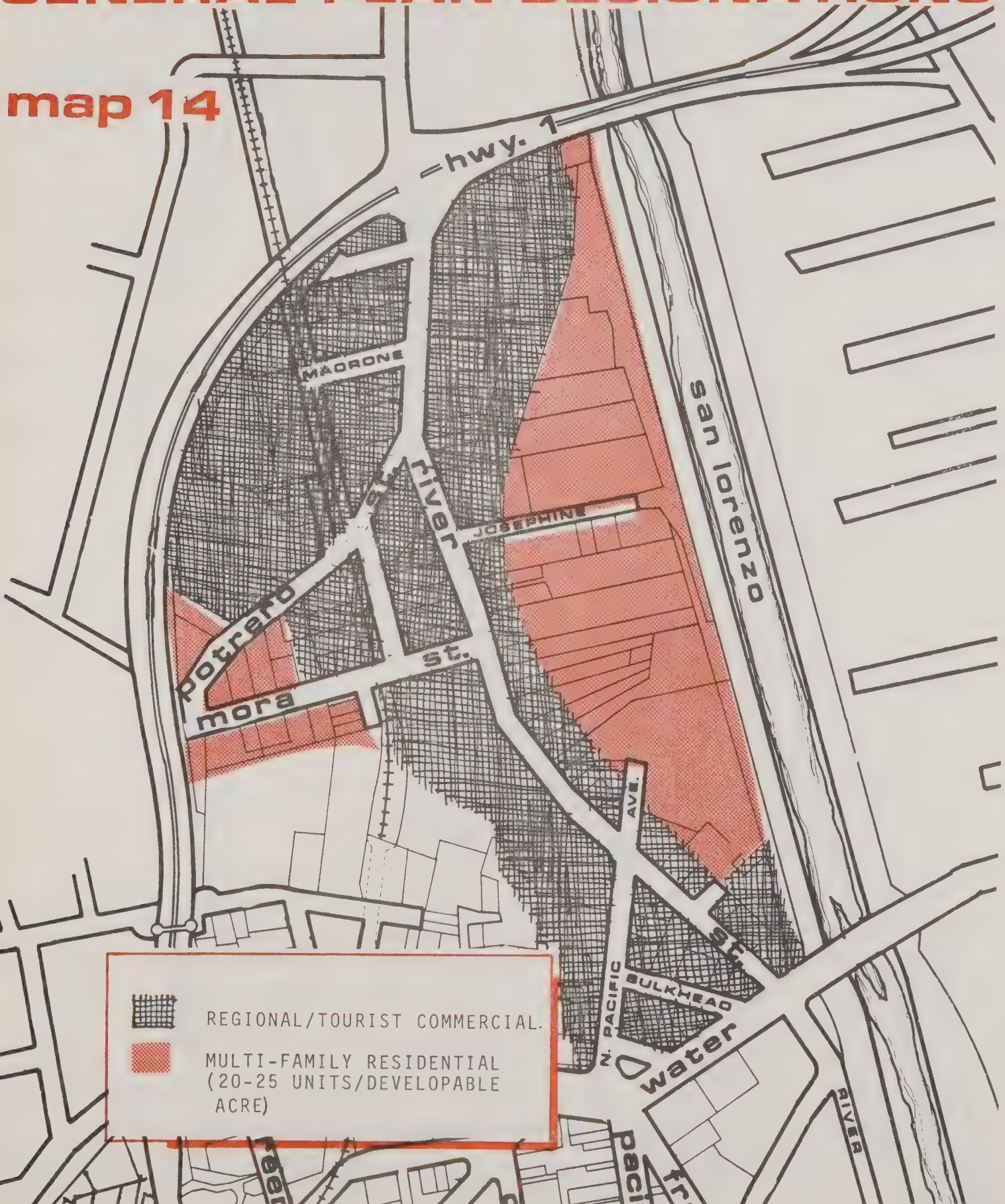
The principal purpose of these General Plan and zoning changes is to coordinate land use designations in the area with market demands, existing land use patterns, and North River Street's economic potential. Map 14 shows existing General Plan designations, and Map 15 shows those that are proposed.

Maps 16 and 17 show existing and proposed zoning, respectively. Proposed zoning designations--IL-R, Industrial Laboratory and Research, north of Josephine, and R-M, Multiple Residence-Medium Rise, in the mobile home park area--reinforce existing land use patterns. The IL-R zoning designation allows for both research and associated assembly uses, as well as offices associated with or independent of these uses. This pattern is consistent with the projected market demand shown in the Recht Hausrath study. This does not isolate any use, but allows a mixing of uses that appear to have actual market demand. The existing General Plan designations in this area (high density residential and commercial) were based on assumptions regarding possible redevelopment of the area as well as market trends that have not occurred over the last three years.

The residential designation (R-M) south of the auto repair uses south of Josephine Street allows for development of adjacent vacant land in conjunction with existing residential uses to produce a cohesive residential neighborhood. Thus, both

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATIONS

map 14



PROPOSED LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

map 15



EXISTING ZONING

map 16



C-H HEAVY COMMERCIAL

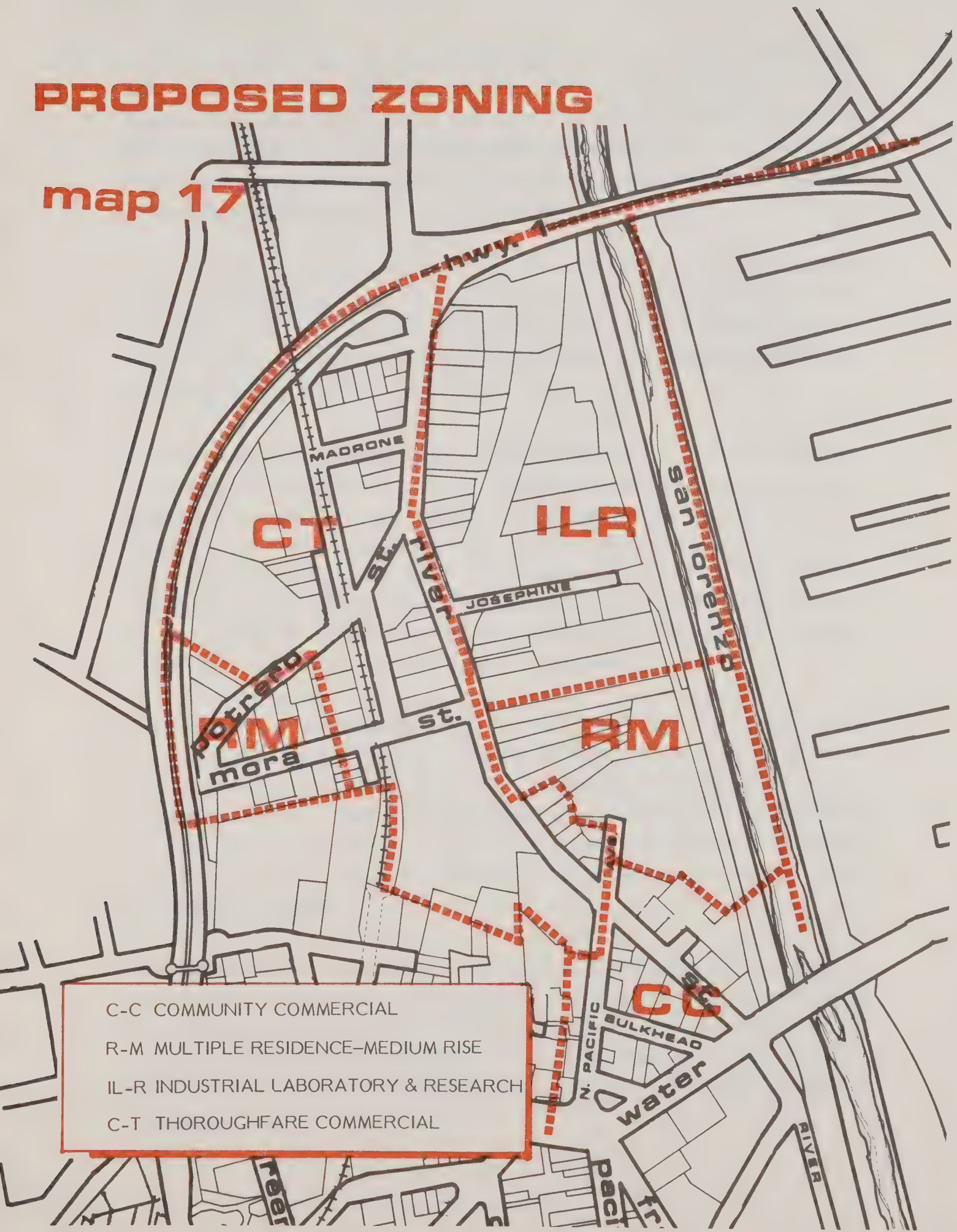
R-M MULTIPLE RESIDENCE-MEDIUM RISE

I-G GENERAL INDUSTRIAL

S-U SPECIAL USE

PROPOSED ZONING

map 17



C-C COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL

R-M MULTIPLE RESIDENCE-MEDIUM RISE

IL-R INDUSTRIAL LABORATORY & RESEARCH

C-T THOROUGHFARE COMMERCIAL

of the existing land use designations shown in the General Plan (Map 14)--residential and commercial--are recognized in the proposed rezonings. However, instead of mixing both of the uses on a north and south axis parallel to River Street, the uses have been made discrete, reflecting the more beneficial location for housing closer to the city, and the more likely development pattern adjacent to the highway north of Josephine Street.

In general terms, the approach taken here is to concentrate residential uses on existing residential parcels and contiguous vacant lands, rather than having a linear residential development along the length of the river from the highway bridge to the mobile home park. The residential enclave in the Potrero/Mora streets area is also designated for residential use.

In the Sash Mill area and the general area along the west side of River Street, the C-T, Thoroughfare Commercial, district would allow a variety of uses that already exist within the Sash Mill and on numerous properties west of the street. The C-T designation is much more appropriate for the area than the C-H, Heavy Commercial designation which does not recognize the recent trends in land use that have occurred along River Street. In addition, the existing Sash Mill use permit would remain in effect to help provide overall guidance for that property within the area now recommended for the C-T designation.

The triangular area bounded by North Pacific Avenue, Water Street, and River Street, and the adjacent commercial frontage on North Pacific Avenue, appear an appropriate area for the C-C, Community Commercial, zoning designation. This designation recognizes the growing integration between this area and the downtown business core (Pacific Avenue) and at the same time matches the existing development pattern, which is primarily one of minimal setbacks and dense commercial development.

The problem in this area is parking. There is a question whether this area might be integrated into the downtown parking district. However, at present, there are no available sites for parking lots in the vicinity; thus inclusion in the parking district does not seem practical or advisable. Future development in the area will therefore have to provide its own off-street parking, as required by the Zoning Ordinance.

Finally, this triangular area should be included in the GMO, Garden Mall Overlay District for more complete design control.

POLICY: Manage the street system in the North River Street area to improve the efficiency of traffic circulation. In conjunction with traffic improvements in the Downtown Core subarea, change the segment of North Pacific Avenue between River Street and Water Street to one-way southbound.

This one-way street would connect to the section of Front Street immediately across the intersection (in front of the Post Office) as a southbound circulation route. The general traffic flow around this triangular area would be southbound on North Pacific Avenue, with both northbound and southbound traffic allowed on River Street between Water Street and North Pacific Avenue (although considerable traffic would likely be in a northbound direction). This traffic improvement, and how it relates to overall traffic recommendations in the Downtown Area Plan, is discussed in detail in Section IV, Circulation and Parking/Public Facilities and Services. It is important to note that River Street is also being designated as a beach access route and major downtown business access route, and such designation is being removed from Chestnut Street.

POLICY: Implement the Zoning Ordinance required setback along River Street from the North Pacific Avenue intersection to the Highway 1 intersection. This plan line allows increased setbacks along River Street to provide for street widening and a minimum three-lane corridor. Redesignate River Street as a "major arterial" in the General Plan.

This action is intended to provide for the widening of River Street--an absolute key to improving conditions within the subarea. Present traffic levels on River Street have been identified as a major problem. Clearly, increased development in the subarea will exacerbate the traffic situation. Combined with general growth in the city--and attendant increases in traffic levels--the existing right-of-way will not adequately serve the area. Thus widening River Street is called for in this plan.

Three lanes are the maximum that could be constructed in the widened right-of-way, and it is anticipated that this would involve two lanes into the city and one lane outbound. (Refer to detailed discussion in Section IV, Circulation and Parking/Public Facilities and Services.) Placing utilities underground, and the planting of street trees are also recommended improvements for River Street.

POLICY: Acquire the state right-of-way north of Josephine Street and develop a city street for access into the landlocked parcels adjacent to the San Lorenzo River.

Acquisition of the state parcel presents the opportunity to create a city street (a cul-de-sac) providing access to technically landlocked parcels adjacent to the San Lorenzo River. It would also provide rear access to those parcels fronting on River Street, thereby reducing turning movements and improving safety. The provision of rear access to parcels fronting on River Street is particularly important in terms of those parcels close to the Highway 1/Highway 9 intersection and the planned widening of River Street at a future date.

The exact alignment of the roadway would be determined after the site is acquired. It may be that land trades would be beneficial in terms of parcel size and potential development, as well as alignment of the roadway. This street could connect with Josephine Street and thence to River Street, or to River Street directly. At the River Street intersection a signal might be considered in the future to allow access onto River Street.

Development of this street should be actively pursued by the city. The first step would be acquisition of the right-of-way from the State of California. Construction of the road itself provides a challenging question. For the past several years, the City of Santa Cruz has only developed new roads in residential subdivisions, where in most cases the subdivision bore the entire cost of the road. In this case there are no proposed subdivisions in the area, and another funding method should be developed.

This could combine a number of options. Because the benefits of a road would accrue almost exclusively to abutting properties, the first option would be the formation of an assessment district with the city cooperating in the payment of

paving costs, which is normal procedure for redevelopment of roads in existing residential areas. In this case, the adjacent landowners would pay for curbs, gutters, and sidewalk improvements.

Another approach would be to take no action at this time, but to require any new developments that front on this right-of-way (or that would have probable access) to sign nonprotest agreements so that future assessment districts are not blocked by their opposition. Whatever method is utilized, this street should be developed prior to any large-scale development in the immediate area.

POLICY: Implement design regulations for the North River Street subarea requiring that development on parcels fronting on the San Lorenzo River provide pedestrian access through the site to the river levee system. Require that the design of buildings utilize river frontage for access and take advantage of the inherent amenity advantages of this location.

One of the primary design resources in the North River Street subarea is the San Lorenzo River. To integrate the river more closely to future development, building design should relate to the river through appropriate setbacks from the levee, landscaping, and pedestrian access from River Street through to the levee. This would complement the existing Josephine Street corridor and provide continuous access points throughout the area. The existing design review process of the city--design permits approved by the Zoning Board--will serve as the reviewing mechanism to determine whether specific designs for projects meet the intent of the guidelines expressed in the Downtown Area Plan.

To aid in the review and evaluation of proposed projects in the North River Street subarea, the following additional guidelines are provided:

Site Planning:

- Common access or interconnected parking lots should be utilized to avoid multiple ingress/egress points along River Street.

- On-site parking facilities along River Street should be located to the rear of the site. Parking lots should not be the focal point of the site plan.
- Drainage should be evaluated on each site and, where necessary, percolation ponds and/or pumping systems utilized if gravity drainage does not appear to be feasible.
- Lighting standards for developments along River Street and the levee should be developed so that the height of the standards is compatible with building design (and in no cases higher than 15 feet).
- Pedestrian and bicycle amenities, as well as connections between River Street and the San Lorenzo River, should be integrated into project design.

Landscaping:

- A minimum of 10-20% of lot area proposed for new construction should be devoted to landscaping. Toward the river, riparian foliage should be used as much as possible.
- Street trees should be included as part of any new construction along River Street, and be of a type that is compatible with an overall street tree program for River Street.

Signing:

- Signing facing River Street should be limited to monument-type signs for proper pedestrian scale (9 feet maximum height).
- Signing for the area adjacent to the River Street/North Pacific/Water Street intersection should be limited primarily to wall signs and other signs similar to those in the adjacent Pacific Garden Mall.

Building Design:

- Buildings adjacent to the San Lorenzo River should be designed with four articulated elevations. This is due to the less dense nature of development in the area, and the potential for views of structures from many vantage points.
- Building design should reflect the area's expected use and scale. Materials should de-emphasize masses of glass or other reflective or shiny surfaces and emphasize masonry, plaster, or wood design features found in other buildings along River Street. In certain areas vernacular architecture is still important and should be emphasized in new structures.
- Building designs and setbacks in the area north of the North Pacific Avenue/River Street intersection should have a suburban scale, while development in the area south of the River Street/North Pacific intersection should be of a more urban nature to provide a transition to the Pacific Garden Mall.
- Building heights should gradually increase from two-story massing near the River Street/Highway 1 intersection to possible three-story heights closer to the intersection of North Pacific Avenue and River Street. In all cases building height must respect the prominence of Mission Hill as a community landmark. New development adjacent to Mission Hill should observe the bluff and maintain the vistas possible from this area.
- Careful consideration should be given to the design of roofs and parapets to assure that mechanical equipment and other additions to the roof are screened not only from street or river level view, but also as viewed from above.

POLICY: Encourage retention of the corridor of eucalyptus trees adjacent to Highway 1 as a community design feature that separates the uses in the North River Street subarea from traffic on Highway 1.

The Sash Mill complex, and other uses in the North River Street subarea, are presently separated from the noise and visual distraction of traffic on Highway 1 by an existing stand of eucalyptus trees. During site development this vegetation

should be preserved to maintain a supportive atmosphere for future development, both residential and commercial, in the North River Street subarea.

In addition, the Sash Mill is an excellent example of regeneration of existing warehouse buildings into an interesting commercial/cottage industry/office complex. Similar additions could be made to various existing structures in the Madrone, Potrero and Mora streets area. Again, each individual project would be reviewed on its own merits. Design permits would be granted by the Zoning Board, weighing the potential of the project to upgrade the general appearance of the North River Street subarea and its ability meet the suggested intent of design guidelines expressed in the Downtown Area Plan.

SECTION IV - CIRCULATION AND PARKING/PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

This section of the plan deals with topics of area-wide implication: circulation and parking, and public facilities and services. Each of the subareas within the Downtown Area Plan has been discussed previously in this document, and various subjects in this section of the plan have already been described where relevant. However, this section treats circulation and parking and related public facilities and services topics in a comprehensive fashion. For example, all circulation changes recommended in this plan are shown on Map 18, and their relationship to traffic flow throughout the Downtown Planning Area is discussed in this section of the plan.

CIRCULATION

The basic function of the street system is three-fold: to provide for area-wide traffic flow, to provide access to specific areas and properties, and to accommodate public parking. The following circulation changes are intended to improve the efficiency of overall traffic flow within the planning area, while mitigating traffic and parking impacts on downtown residential neighborhoods.

The most significant circulation change recommended in the Downtown Area Plan concerns the designation of River Street as both a coastal access route (tourist access to the beach/wharf/boardwalk complex), and a posted major entryway to the downtown commercial district. This change is coordinated with the deletion of Chestnut Street as a coastal access route. This approach takes visitor traffic through the central business district (which is often an asset), and removes such traffic from a local residential area.

Coordinated with this change, the direction of traffic on both North Pacific Avenue and Front Street has been altered as shown on Map 18. The segment of North Pacific Avenue from River Street to Water Street has been made one-way southbound, and the section of Front Street in front of the Post Office between Water Street and River Street (near Cooper) has also been made one-way southbound. In this configuration, Front Street completes the River Street/Front Street route to the beach area. At the southern end of the mall this traffic flow

map 18



system is complemented by having Pacific Avenue stop and give way to Front Street rather than the reverse, which has been the case prior to recommendations in this plan.

Traffic flow in the northbound direction will move up Front Street past the Soquel Avenue intersection. Just past the "T" with Cooper Street, northbound traffic will be required to go to the right on River Street and advance to the intersection with Water Street.

Two major changes are related to these new traffic patterns: 1) removal of the traffic signal located on Front Street between Cooper Street and Water Street (it is no longer needed due to the new traffic pattern), and 2) the changing of a stop sign at the Wells Fargo Bank location where River Street coming from Cooper Street will be the uninterrupted flow, and River Street South will stop and give way to this flow as it approaches the Water Street intersection.

These changes in the traffic pattern are designed to accommodate the greater amount of traffic entering the downtown area on River Street, and the general growth in traffic volume within the City of Santa Cruz which has occurred in the last decade and which will likely continue in the future. It is interesting to note that the city grew by 29% between 1970 and 1980 (from a population of 32,100 to 41,483). During this same decade, the number of employed people within the City of Santa Cruz increased by a phenomenal 72%. During this time, the physical boundaries of the City of Santa Cruz remained essentially constant. Thus it is clear there is a very significant increase in traffic on city streets, and that this traffic is probably particularly acute at commute hours.

It is a fact of life that this growth produces significantly increased congestion on city streets. There is relatively little that can be done about this, and the citizens of Santa Cruz will need to resign themselves to increased urban congestion as a result of the increase in the size of their city (as well as Santa Cruz County). However, astute application of traffic management techniques to increase the efficiency of traffic flow is one of the few remedies available. The proposed changes outlined above are intended to attain this objective.

Intersection Improvements

Map 19 shows eight intersections recommended for improvement. Each of these intersections was discussed in detail within the appropriate subarea. However, specific intersection configurations are presented in the following pages, including the intersection of River Street and Highway 1. Changes to that intersection will be taking place in calendar year 1984 as a result of CALTRANS improvements.

Several of these intersections work together to increase the efficiency of traffic flow within the city. This is in addition to their specific alteration to improve geometry or other problems that might be of a more localized nature.

Starting on River Street, a system of intersection improvements includes the Highway 1-River Street intersection (No. 1 on Map 19), followed by the intersection of River Street and North Pacific Avenue (No. 2), the intersection of Cooper Street and Front Street (No. 3), the intersection of Soquel and Front Street (No. 4), and finally the intersection of Pacific Avenue and Front Street (No. 5).

This group of intersections functions to increase traffic flow along this major corridor composed of River Street and Front Street. As previously noted, a signalized intersection on Front at River Street has been eliminated due to the one-way street pattern in that area. An additional signal might be considered in the future at the intersection of Josephine Street and River Street when development occurs along the state right-of-way north of Josephine.

Another potential improvement involves intersection No. 6 at Cedar, Center, and Chestnut streets. Combined with the existing signal at Center and Laurel, this route provides direct access along Center Street from the downtown area to the beach. Actual design of this intersection, and the one-way treatment of streets in this location (as shown on Map 18), will have to be postponed until design of the new parking structure on Lot No. 2 has been finalized. Ingress and egress points for the parking structure will influence the circulation pattern in this area. Further along Cedar Street, intersection No 7 will be modified to provide better definition to improve safety for pedestrians crossing this unusually wide area.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

map 19



The Chestnut/Union/Green streets intersection (No. 8) is also being modified to provide clearer direction for traffic flow. Residents in the immediate area worked with the Public Works department to develop an improved design for the intersection.

Finally, at some point in the future, it is possible that the Chestnut Street-Laurel Street intersection will require some form of improvement. Laurel Street continues to increase in importance in the city's overall traffic flow pattern, and Chestnut Street, although deleted as a coastal access route, carries significant traffic volumes--particularly during weekdays--showing that it is an important collector street. As previously noted in Section III, discussions concerning this intersection failed to produce a specific recommendation for improvements.

Residential Traffic Islands

One of the major objectives in the Downtown Area Plan is to institute traffic improvements that protect the quality of residential neighborhoods, and at the same time preserve the primary function of the city's overall street system. This topic has received considerable attention during the course of the downtown area planning process.

In November, 1982, the City Council approved a series of residential traffic islands which resulted from initial recommendations in the Livable Streets Study. Continuing discussion between the city Public Works Department and neighborhood residents resulted in a set of specific improvements; within the planning area, ten residential traffic islands are to be implemented as a result of Council action. These islands are shown on Map 20.

At a future date, pending review of the reception of these islands, some additional traffic islands might be installed within the Downtown Planning Area. However, at this point, the approved program meets the principal needs of the neighborhood and maintains effective traffic flow within the downtown area. This particular program has been worked out through numerous meetings between neighborhood representatives, the Public Works Department, and the Parks and Recreation Department. It represents a compromise and synthesis of the various points of view represented.

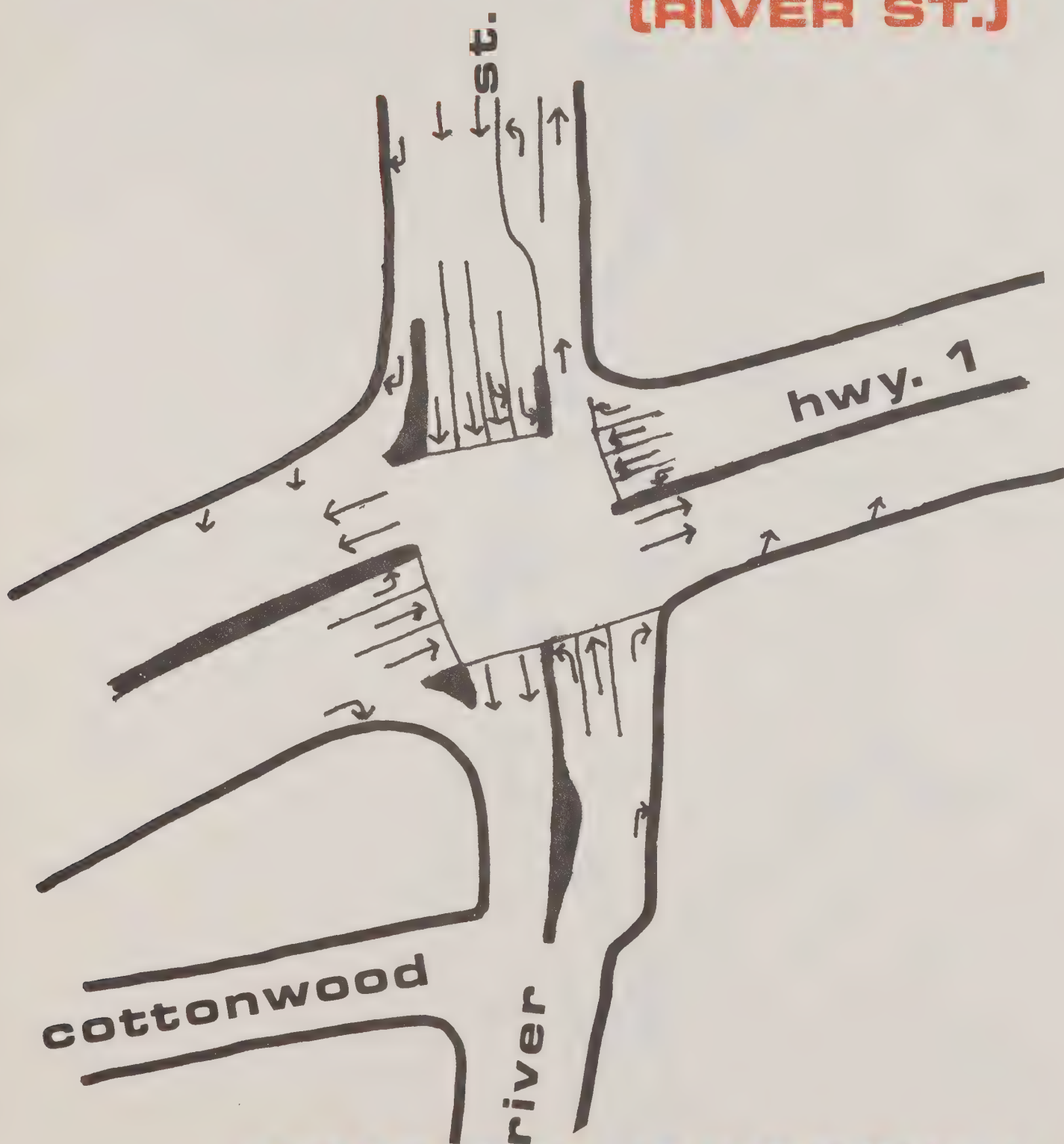
map 20



INTERSECTION 1

HIGHWAY 1 & HIGHWAY 9

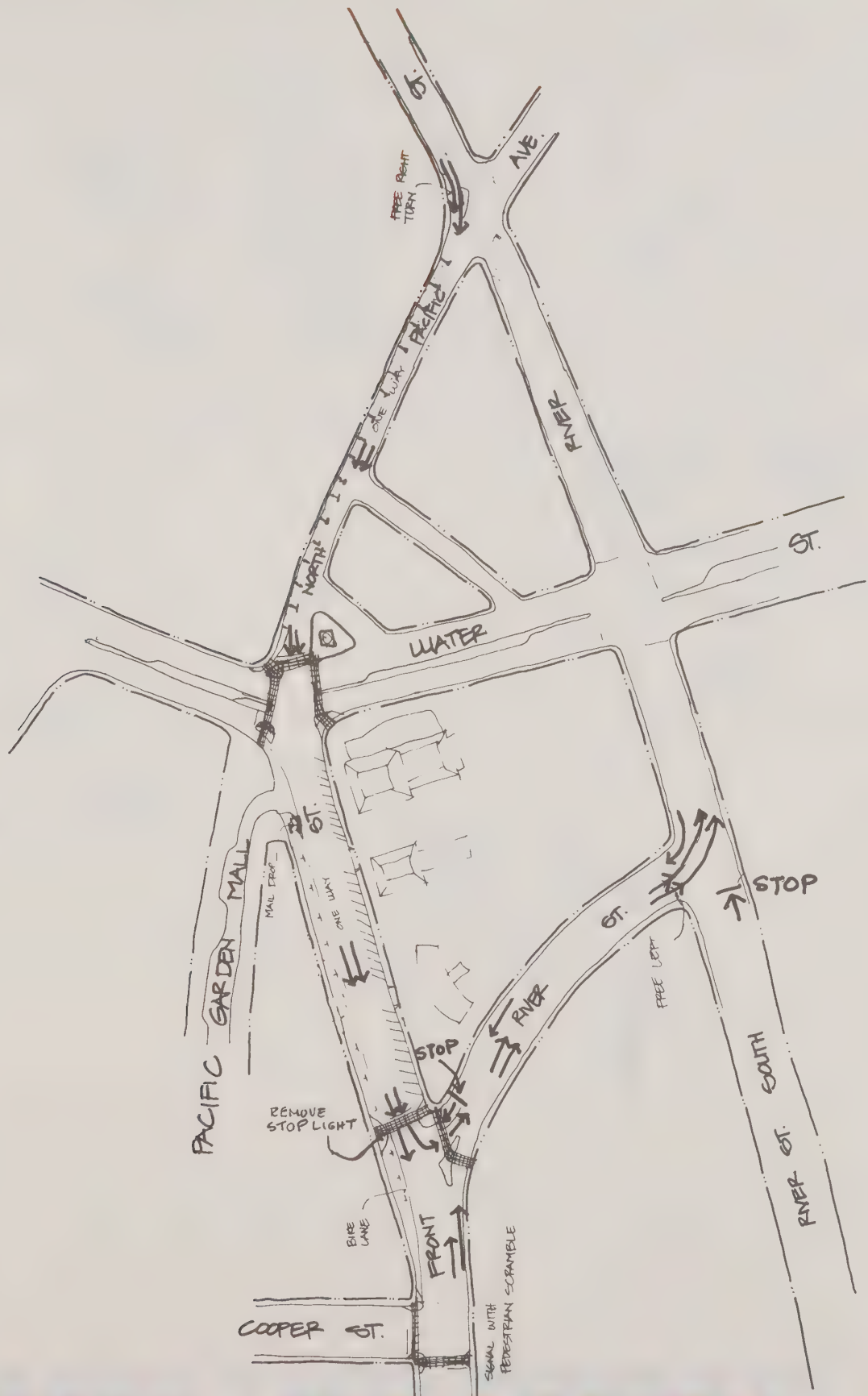
(RIVER ST.)



**PROPOSED WIDENING &
TURN POCKETS**

INTERSECTION 2 & 3

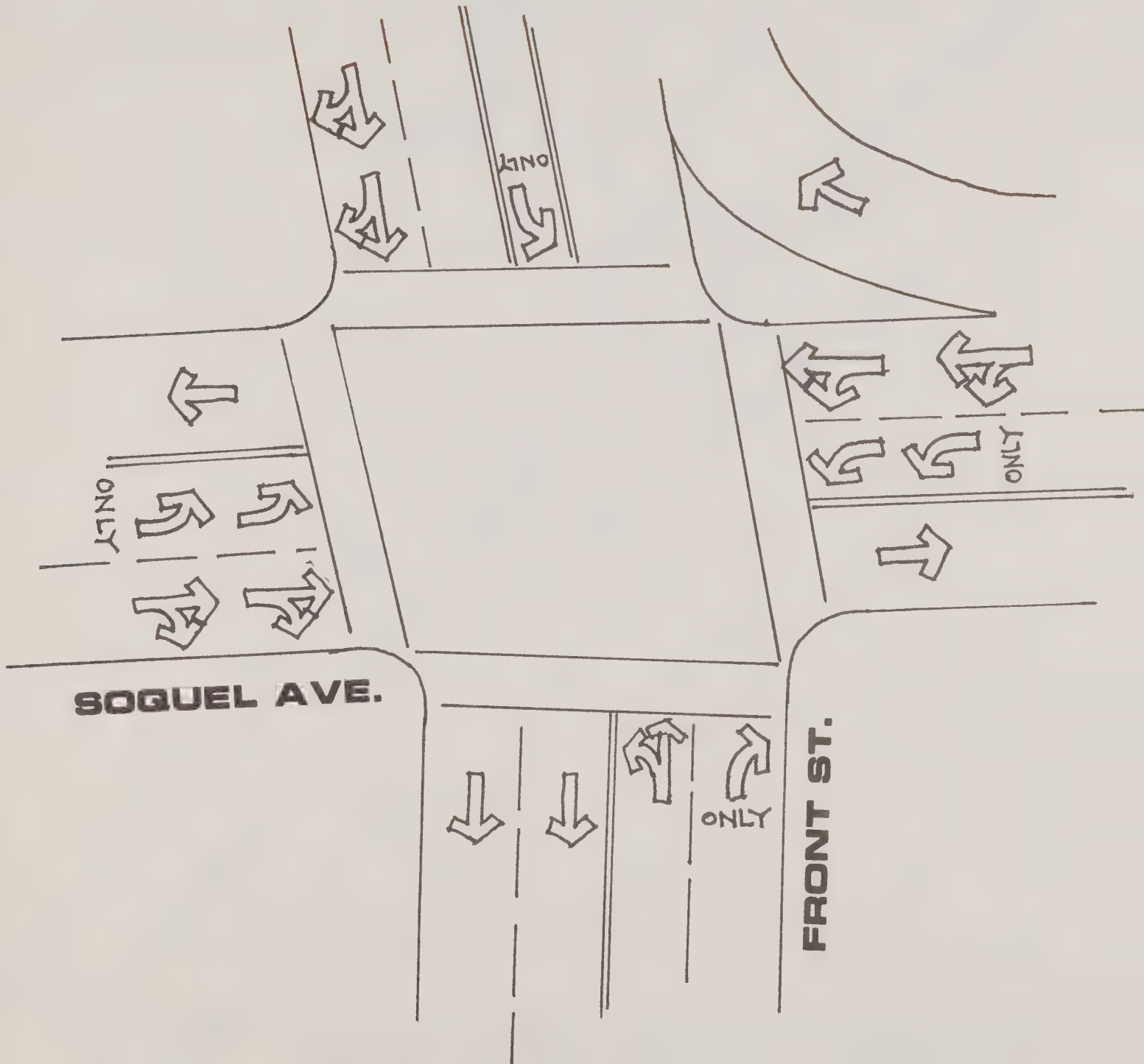
FRONT·RIVER·NORTH PACIFIC



PROPOSED LOOP SYSTEM

INTERSECTION 4

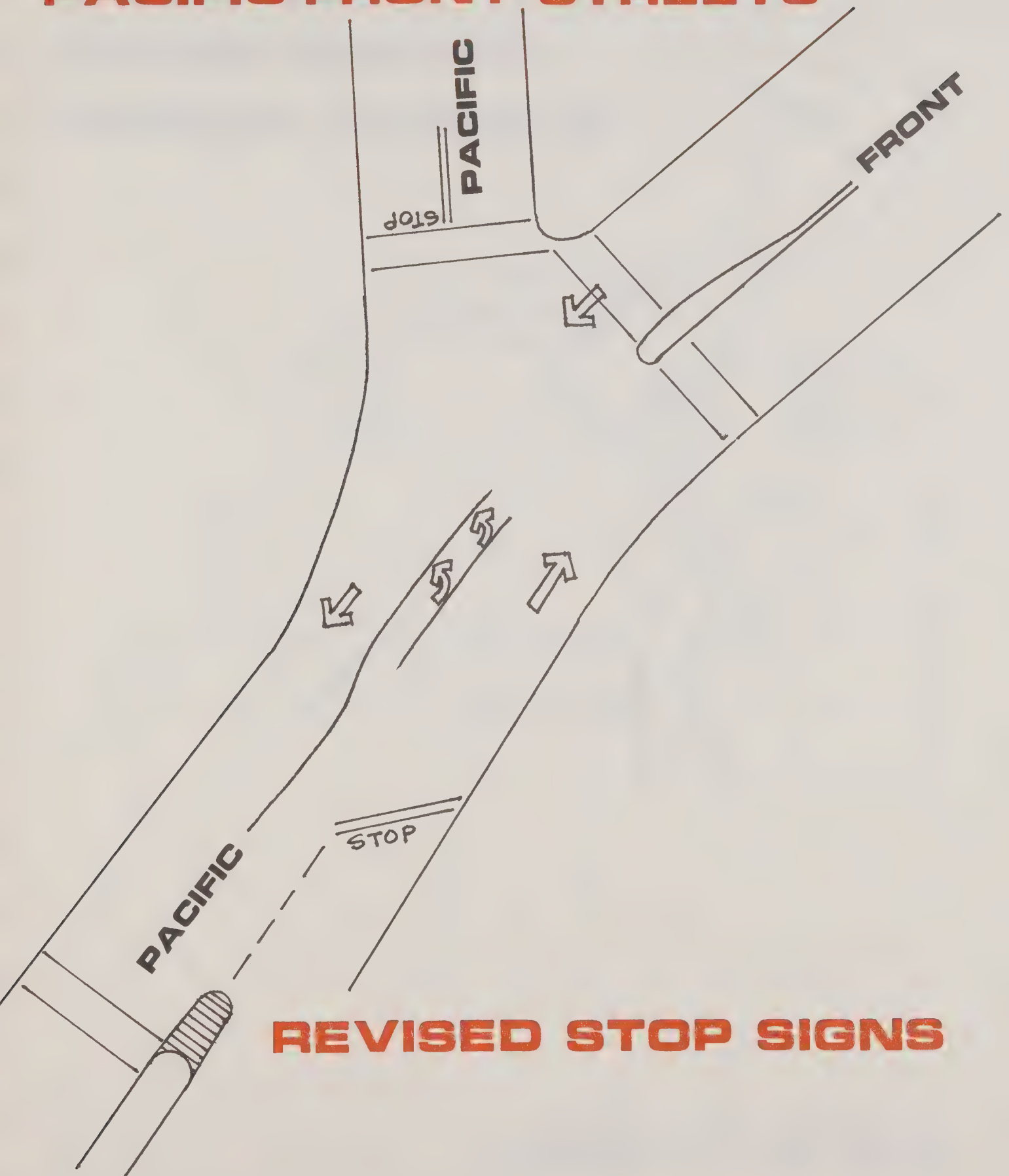
SOQUEL AVE. • FRONT ST.



INCREASED TURN POCKETS

INTERSECTION 5

PACIFIC·FRONT STREETS



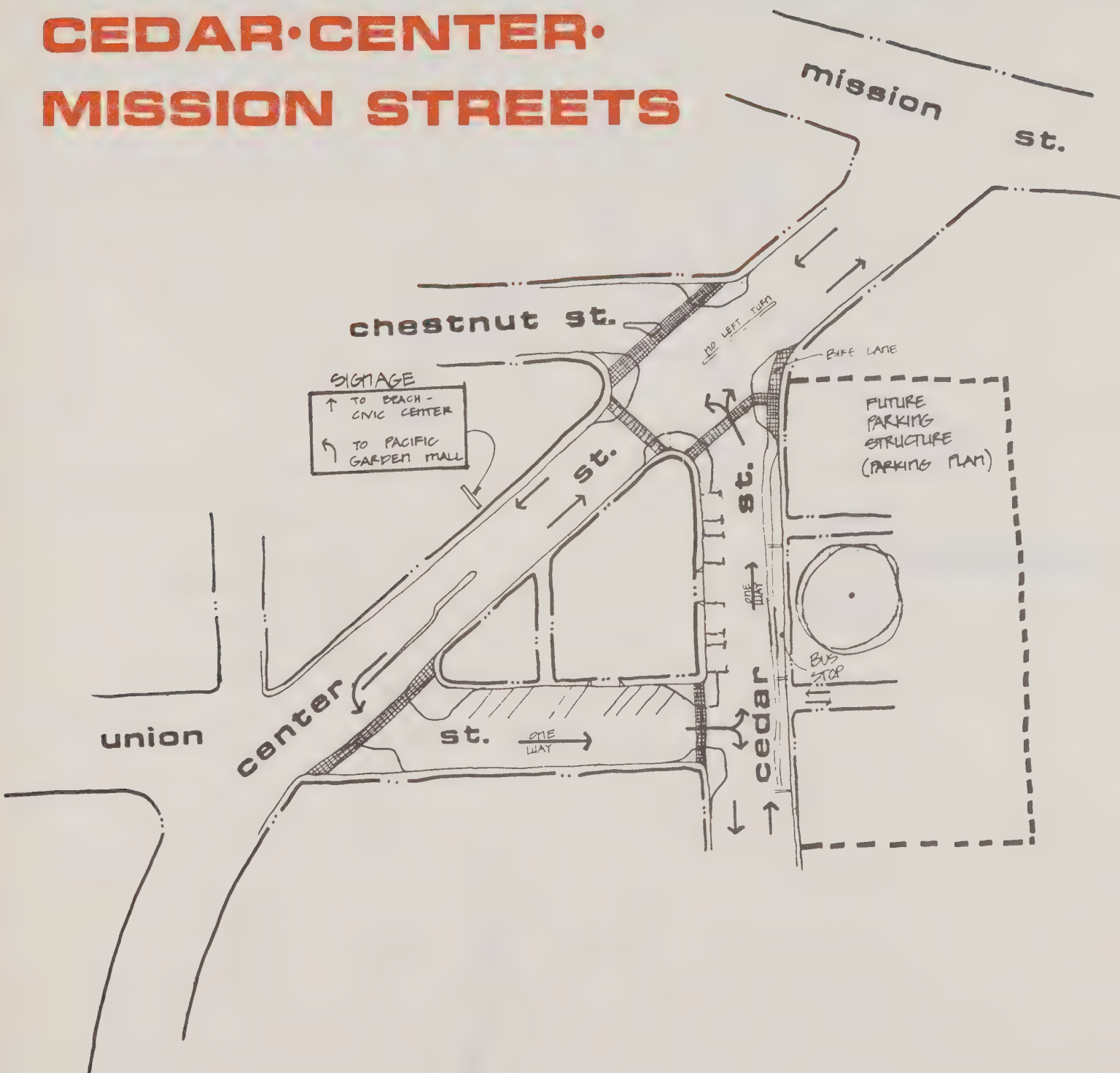
REVISED STOP SIGNS

INTERSECTION 6

CHESTNUT.

CEDAR.CENTER.

MISSION STREETS



LOOP SYSTEM

INTERSECTION 7

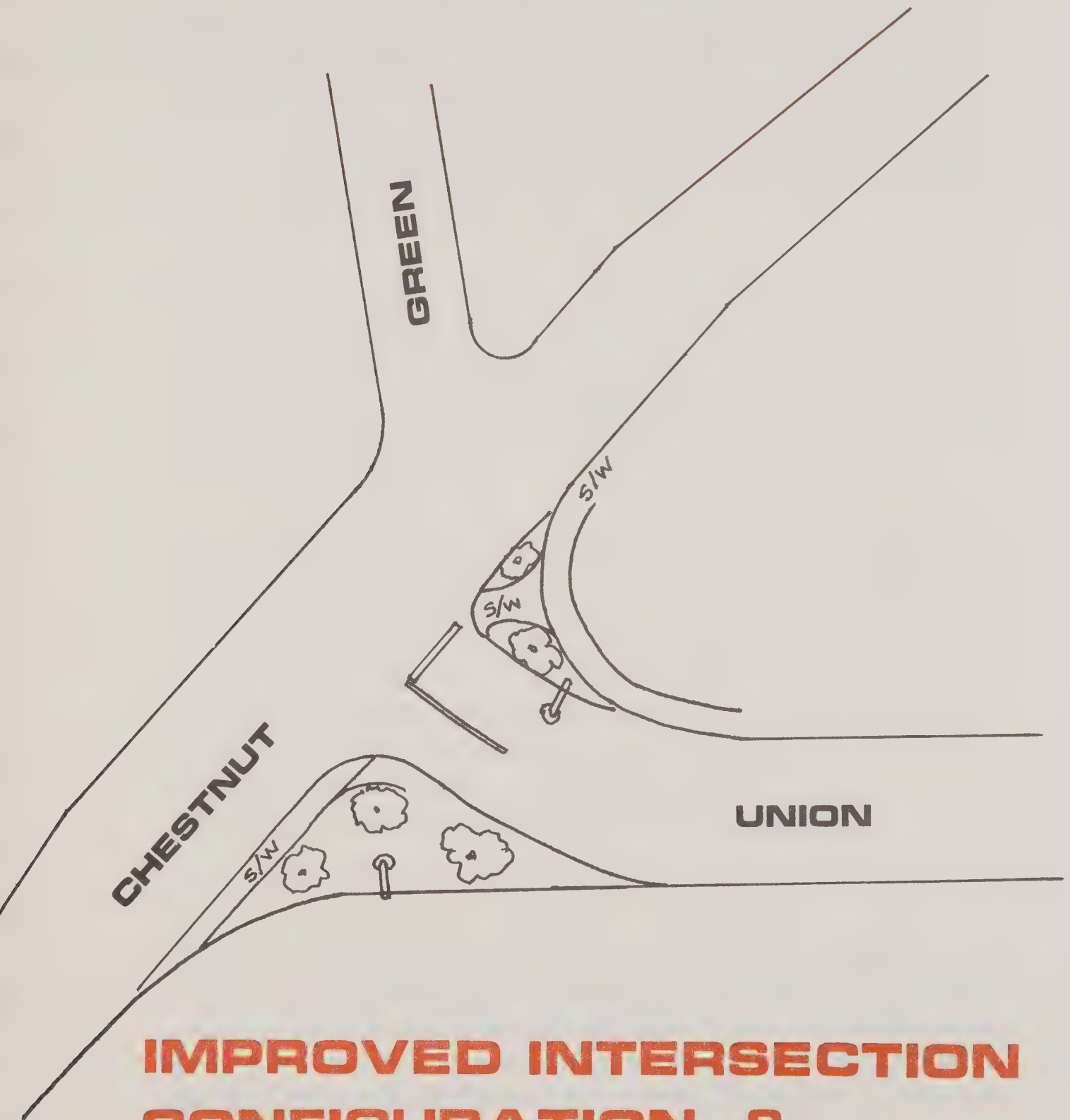
CEDAR·LINCOLN STREETS



INCREASED PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

INTERSECTION 8

CHESTNUT·UNION·GREEN STS.



**IMPROVED INTERSECTION
CONFIGURATION &
BEAUTIFICATION**

Directional Signing System

POLICY: Revise the directional signing system within the City of Santa Cruz to reflect city policies and to create a clear, efficient and consistent signing system which provides accurate directions to motorists. This system should be economical in terms of the numbers of signs, striving to reduce superfluous signs whenever possible, and the system should be coordinated with other agencies such as Santa Cruz County and CALTRANS.

Changes to major routes within the downtown planning area--principally the substitution of River Street and Front Street as a coastal access route rather than Chestnut Street, and the substitution of lower Center Street rather than Washington Street as a link to the beach area--will be accompanied by appropriate signing changes. Thus the city's directional signing system will reflect major policy changes to the circulation system.

In terms of eliminating the present confusing use of four different signing systems (varied in size, style, format, etc.) the Public Works Department is engaged in a program to recommend a single signing system including one format, one set of colors, and one notation system to be applied not only in the downtown planning area, but throughout the city as a whole. This program will be applied through time as funding and staff resources permit, once the specific system has been developed. The system will consolidate signing, eliminating unnecessary standards and/or signs wherever possible. Coordination with other agencies to assure consistent terminology is also an essential aspect of this program.

PARKING

Since the mid-1950's, the City of Santa Cruz has pursued a comprehensive parking program for the downtown through the establishment of a parking district. Several parking lots and two parking structures were created in the downtown area through parking district activities. However, there have been few additions to parking facilities in the downtown for the past several years. This has been predicated on changes to public transit and some assumptions on the part of the city.

The first of these assumptions was that alternative means of transportation, either public transit or bicycles, would increasingly be used for trips to the downtown area. With the growth of public transit during the 1970's, and the inclusion of bicycle paths in the downtown area, a ten-year period has now elapsed, allowing for the evaluation of the use of these forms of transportation. The information to date shows that while these alternative means do provide viable methods for reaching the downtown area, they do not account for the percentage of trips that was originally assumed. This probably results from a variety of factors ranging from the price stabilization and availability of gasoline, the introduction of more fuel-efficient cars, and the general growth and dispersal of the work force in the city and county (witness the 72% increase in employed persons within the city between 1970 and 1980).

This reluctance to give up the automobile as a primary form of transportation --when combined with three other major influences for the future--suggests that additional parking is needed in the downtown area, at least for the next decade. Of the three factors which suggest that additional parking will be needed in the near term, the projected growth in office activity in the downtown area is primary. As noted in the economics section of the plan, the Recht Hausrath study projects 400-900 new office employees in the downtown area over the next decade. These employees will compete with customers for parking spaces within the downtown. Although some of these people will undoubtedly use public transit or bicycle or pedestrian modes for reaching their point of employment, the majority will use automobiles.

In addition to office growth, the Recht Hausrath study projects a continuing specialty retail market in the downtown area, with intensified employee and customer use per square foot. Again, significant numbers of these new employees (estimated at 240) as well as customers will use automobiles.

Finally, the relocation of the new transit center south of Cathcart Street will be a parking-inducing influence in the lower mall area. There will be increased demand for parking as a result of the transit center itself, as well as from the intensification of land uses, which will likely occur in this area.

As will be brought out more clearly in the following policies, there is a direct relationship between the demand for commercial parking in the downtown area and the demand for and impact on residential parking in the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Thus alleviating parking problems in the commercial core directly benefits the nearby residential areas. It is clear that public transit, bicycle-pedestrian travel, and other forms of transportation are not going to remove the demand for parking in the downtown area at least through the next decade. Following are policies and programs relative to commercial and residential parking within the downtown planning area.

Commercial Parking

In order to create a balance between the needs of the downtown commercial core and parking needs in adjacent residential neighborhoods, several steps need to be taken.

POLICY: Provide additional downtown commercial parking opportunities through the restriping of existing facilities, the construction of one or more parking structures, and acquisition of additional parking sites.

The Downtown Parking Plan (JHK & Associates, 1981) recommended restriping of existing parking facilities in the downtown parking district to reflect the greater percentage of compact cars now in use within Santa Cruz County. This program would result in a gain of approximately 100 spaces in existing parking facilities. This program is now underway, and it is a policy of the Downtown Area Plan that it should be carried to completion.

A second recommendation in the Downtown Parking Plan was the construction of a parking structure to be located on Municipal Lot No. 2, located behind the P.G.&E. building (refer to Map 21). In November, 1982, the City of Santa Cruz sent Requests for Proposals to design firms to explore feasibility for construction of a parking structure in this location, to possibly be combined with either housing and/or retail commercial uses. The net gain in parking spaces at this site would be approximately 120-150 spaces. Construction of this parking facility would help alleviate parking problems in the northern area of the mall, but it may also only

PARKING FACILITIES

map 21



maintain the ratio of available public parking in this area due to the potential construction of an office building on Lot No. 10 at the end of Cooper Street.

Another city project, currently in progress during development of the Downtown Area Plan, is a redesign and beautification of two city parking lots (Map 21). This is related to the previously mentioned program for a parking structure on Municipal Lot No. 2. The two parking lots considered in the redesign and beautification program are parking Lot No. 1, located on Front Street near Soquel, and Lot No. 4, located at Cedar and Cathcart streets behind Ford's Department Store. This project calls for redesign of the two lots to gain additional parking spaces and a beautification program to improve the appearance of these lots. Lots No. 1 and 4 will be laid out to gain parking spaces, but they will also be designed to accommodate potential parking structures at some future date. These two sites, Lots No. 1 and 4, are the most logical locations for an additional parking structure in the downtown at some future date.

Finally, the city should pursue the acquisition of three additional sites in the downtown area, the only remaining viable parking lot sites in the downtown (refer to Map 21). The action necessary for the city at this time is to negotiate for first rights of refusal with the owners of these three lots which could serve the area south of Cathcart Street.

The first of these lots is located at the corner of Cathcart and Front streets. It is currently a used car lot for Marina Pontiac-Cadillac. It should be noted that the city is not seeking acquisition of this site at the present time, but merely first right of refusal on the property if the use of the site changes and/or a vacancy occurs on the site.

The other lot to be pursued in this fashion is located at the corner of Front and Laurel streets (the former location of a Toyota dealership, presently occupied by an antique business). This lot is contiguous to street right-of-way which is not used for vehicular movement. At some future date, if this building were vacant and the property for sale, the city could purchase this location to be combined with its existing right-of-way to provide considerable parking opportunities in the lower Pacific Avenue area. Again, the intent here is not to buy a viable operating

business, but if the property is for sale and/or there is a change in use, then the city should have first right of refusal on the parcel.

The city presently leases a site on Front Street (Parcel 2H of the redevelopment project area) that provides 120 \pm parking spaces. A project has been approved that would displace this public parking. Construction of this development suggests serious consideration of building another parking level on the adjacent Front Street parking structure. Since it is not possible to predict where all future parking opportunities may arise, the city should stand ready to take advantage of opportunities wherever they may occur--including reuse or expansion of existing facilities.

Residential Parking

The fact that little additional commercial parking has been provided in the downtown over the last several years now manifests itself in the utilization of a number of adjacent residential streets for overflow parking--primarily employee. While it may not be possible to provide for the total parking needs of the central business district within its boundaries, the proportion of parking provided in that area for office workers and customers should be increased, and this will mitigate the impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods. In addition, several techniques can be applied within the residential neighborhoods to alleviate parking problems.

POLICY: Provide selected short-term parking opportunities to respond to the needs for on-street parking in the downtown residential neighborhoods.

Even without the intrusion of commercial parking into the downtown residential neighborhoods, there would still be competition for parking spaces. Much of the housing stock in the downtown area was built prior to the requirement for off-street parking. Thus with the advent of more drivers living in the area, on-street parking is the resource which supplies residential parking requirements.

In response to the above policy, Map 22 shows selected 2-hour and 24-minute parking spaces within the downtown planning area. These spaces are intended to provide turn-over parking for residents in the neighborhoods. The nature of the

TIME-LIMIT PARKING

map 22



problem is such that if a resident is already parked on the street in the morning (having parked the car overnight), and then leaves returning some time later, there frequently are no parking spaces available due to commercial parking intrusion. With the 2-hour parking zones, which would not be useful to downtown employees, it is likely that there would be some opportunity to regain a parking space in the immediate vicinity of one's home. This would necessitate moving the car within two hours, but at a later time there may well be available spaces.

This is not a perfect solution to the tight parking situation that exists in residential neighborhoods. However, a subcommittee of the Downtown Area Plan Task Force, including neighborhood representatives, recommended the spaces shown on Map 22, and felt this would be an appropriate start for the program. The spaces selected are not in front of private residences, but in front of commercial or public uses. In fact, this is a pilot program. The satisfactory nature of the solution can be evaluated over time and expanded if the results are positive.

A second pilot program is recommended in the area of the Rincon Street triangle. Map 7 shows a proposed redesign of the triangle area, creating an open space facility (discussed further under Recreation Facilities), and also the realignment of the parking spaces that exist in the area at the present time. The pilot program envisions having these parking spaces available on a permit basis, either to residents in the immediate vicinity (the newly refurbished Hinds House is a rental facility with 10 available rooms, and no off-street parking), or to employees in the area. Again, this pilot project would be evaluated in terms of costs and benefits, and a decision made as to whether it should be abandoned, continued, or expanded.

It is important to note that the two proposed pilot programs for residential parking in the downtown planning area are not suggested in a vacuum. They are coupled with the commercial parking expansion discussed earlier in this section. Without these improvements, the residential pilot programs would not be adequate. It is hoped that, when combined with additional lots and/or structures, they will alleviate parking problems in the downtown residential neighborhoods.

PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Following are descriptions of the remaining public facilities and services within the downtown planning area. Each section contains specific policies and programs to deal with the opportunities or problems previously identified in the Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report.

Public Transit System

Transit service to the downtown area improved substantially during the 1970's. The most significant improvement to transit facilities in the near future will be the establishment of the new Metropolitan Transit District Center (an off-street facility) located south of Cathcart between Pacific Avenue and Front Street. This facility will provide intermodal transfer potential with the Greyhound system, which is immediately adjacent to the new transit site, and will provide shelter for passengers. The relocation of the transit center does result in the net loss of 8 parking spaces located on Pacific Avenue. As previously discussed, this impact has been addressed in the plan by the recommendation to acquire additional off-street parking facilities in the immediate vicinity.

In terms of new routes and related public facilities, such as bus stops, the following policy addresses the relationship of the Downtown Area Plan to Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District operations.

POLICY: Continue to work closely with the Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District to provide attractive facilities in the downtown area and enhance access to the public transit system.

This policy is already being implemented in the redesign and beautification of two parking lots previously mentioned, and through development of Parcel 2-H (825 Front Street) within the redevelopment project area. Improvements to these locations include bus stops as well as bicycle-pedestrian facilities. Other city projects, such as the widening of River Street, would include bus stops as intrinsic design requirements.

The transit district is implementing two programs that have relevance to the Downtown Area Plan. Both of these programs are designed to increase ridership on public transportation by employees who work in the downtown area. The first program is a computerized ticketing system, which allows employers to pay for the employees' use of the transit district buses, and pay for only those trips actually taken by employees. This system has significant benefits for both employees and employers. It would provide employees free transportation to work and it would make additional parking spaces available for customers in the downtown.

The second improvement planned by the transit district is the acquisition of a remote lot in the vicinity of Dominican Hospital and the Soquel Drive overpass. There would be direct bus service from this location to the downtown; the service time between the remote lot and the downtown transit center is anticipated to be six minutes. Again, this system is intended for employees who could park at the remote lot and enjoy quick and efficient bus service to the downtown. There would be no charge for parking at the remote lot, and again, parking spaces in the downtown would be made available for customers rather than employees.

One exciting possibility for transit service in the downtown area is regular bus service between the transit center and the beach area. This would provide a frequently discussed link between the downtown area and the beach. Such a connection could alleviate traffic in the downtown area and help to integrate beach activities with the downtown. This idea is currently being explored by the transit district. They are seeking funds for a pilot project to provide noiseless electrical service on this route through a buried electrical cable that provides power for the vehicle. The bus/tram could suggest any of a number of motifs, possibly that of an antique streetcar.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The City of Santa Cruz has adopted a bicycle plan, which provides three classifications of bike paths throughout the city. Communication with the Santa Cruz County Cycling Club during the downtown area planning process indicated that signing for the bike system needs to be improved, particularly on the levee paths which lack entry points. Bicycle route signing will be addressed under the comprehensive signing program previously discussed in the circulation section.

One of the principal needs in the downtown planning area relative to bicycle facilities is increased parking. There are several locking posts currently on the mall and the Zoning Ordinance requires them in new developments. However, there is still a lack of secured bicycle parking in the downtown area. The previously mentioned redesign and beautification of two city parking lots addresses this need by calling for the inclusion of covered, lockable bicycle parking in the lots. The design of other improvements in the downtown area needs to reflect bicycle-pedestrian considerations. This is covered in the following policy.

POLICY: Provide missing links in the existing bicycle-pedestrian system within the downtown, and require that the design of all new facilities (curb islands, etc.) address the needs of bicyclists, pedestrians, and the handicapped.

The two missing links in the bicycle-pedestrian system within the downtown include the lack of sidewalk/bicycle access on the Chestnut Street Extension, and missing sidewalk on Laurel Street approaching the California Street intersection. These two links should be completed with sidewalks, thus providing bicycle-pedestrian access.

In terms of handicapped access, the pedestrian corridor which includes the San Lorenzo River pedestrian bridge dead-ends on the western side of River Street. There are ramps on the eastern side of the street, at the foot of the bridge, but not on the western side. A ramp here, including a ramp down the grade separation adjacent to the United Artists Theater, would provide handicapped access from the county building complex to the central commercial district.

This same approach would provide access through the Palomar Arcade if ramps were installed on both the east and west curbs of Front Street opposite the arcade.

Finally, the intersections of Front and River, Front, Pacific and Water, and Water and River streets all have wheelchair ramps. However, they also include islands in the middle of the intersection which require wheelchairs to enter traffic space in order to cross. These islands should be analyzed to ascertain whether or not cut-outs are feasible, and these should be incorporated with the circulation changes previously discussed in this section of the plan. Further, these approaches

would also aid bicyclists as well as the handicapped in traversing the downtown area.

Recreation Facilities

Public recreation facilities in the downtown planning area have been discussed in other sections of the plan. Public improvements are of two kinds. The first is addition of two small recreation facilities within the Downtown Neighborhood subarea. These include possible acquisition or rental of the vacant lot adjacent to the YWCA for a play area serving neighborhood children, and the alteration of the Rincon triangle to provide a larger, more attractive turf area in this location as well as improved pedestrian access between the bluff and the downtown.

The second recreation addition in the downtown would be the availability of Santa Cruz High School playfields for community-wide recreational uses. This is the only large open space within the downtown planning area. Clearly, school activities must take precedence in any use of this field, but during certain hours of the day and certain seasons of the year, particularly in the summer, the playfields might be available for general recreation use such as unstructured games--frisbee throwing, running, and other such activities. Due to the size of the fields and the potential for large-scale use, maintenance costs for increased usage are a matter to be discussed between the city and school system. As part of the Downtown Area Plan, the city should undertake discussions with the school district exploring the possibilities of wider use for these facilities and of sharing some segment of maintenance costs.

Public Buildings

Public buildings provide an immediate means for increasing the interest and vitality of the downtown area. The city's public buildings available at the present time for public uses include the Civic Auditorium and the Loudon Nelson Center. Both of these provide for community-wide activities, and, at present, are utilized at maximum or near-maximum capacity.

As previously noted, the Neary-Rodriguez Adobe, located in the Mission Hill subarea, has the potential to become an additional public facility in the downtown

planning area. As noted in that section, it is recommended for low intensity uses which would not conflict with residential uses on Mission Hill.

The one area that provides an interesting opportunity to the city for an additional public facility is the Octagon/jail site and adjacent parking lot located in the Downtown Core subarea. Potential use of this facility is now only in the earliest stages of discussion and the exact scope and nature of such a facility is unknown at the present time. The options range from a commercial complex to a cultural center; the permutations of these alternatives are essentially boundless at the present time.

Another public facility, although not a building proper, is the Pacific Garden Mall. The mall could be utilized effectively as a cultural resource. Carefully selected and promoted activities could bring increased attention as well as customers to the downtown area. The key to this utilization of the mall is successful promotion and careful selection of events. These items have been addressed in the economics section of the Downtown Area Plan.

Street Trees and Landscaping

One significant feature of the downtown planning area that has been provided by the city and that has encouraged the rehabilitation of both commercial and neighborhood areas is street trees. Street trees and landscaping on the Pacific Garden Mall are probably the most important ingredients in its success. There are several streets within the downtown planning area that have street trees, and these lend considerable amenity to residential neighborhoods.

As noted under the Circulation Section, a downtown neighborhood street tree, tree island, and landscaping program has already been implemented. Before recommendations can be made for increased numbers of street trees or additional landscaping within the planning area, the acceptance of the tree island program needs to be monitored, and the maintenance costs associated with this program need to be known.

An additional question relative to street trees and landscaping is the relationship of maintenance responsibilities between the city and individual property owners. The

Parks and Recreation Department is currently engaged in the creation and review of the street tree ordinance which details the responsibility for maintenance of street trees and related landscaping. As of the date of the Downtown Area Plan program, this topic had not been resolved by the City Council.

Water/Sewer Systems

No problems were identified within the downtown planning area relative to the water and sewer systems. Both the Water Department and the Public Works Department have ongoing maintenance programs and capital improvement planning programs to take care of their systems' needs within the city as a whole and within the downtown planning area. No recommendations are made relative to water and sewer systems in this Downtown Area Plan.

Police/Fire Services

As with water and sewer systems, police and fire services within the downtown planning area were identified as adequate in the Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report. Present levels of service for both police and fire, and response times for police and fire calls, are well within the city's standards. In fact, the downtown area is especially well-served by virtue of the location of the police station and main fire station within this section of the city.

Questions as to behaviour problems on the mall are being discussed by the Mall Commission. If and when recommendations are made relative to these kinds of questions, and if these recommendations impact upon police service, then they would be debated by the City Council as to the need for increased police patrol or other such activities relative to the mall.

San Lorenzo River

The question of the river is a comprehensive one for it involves flood protection as well as land use and aesthetics. The storm of January 4, 1982, made clear that the City of Santa Cruz is not immune to flood damage. Although the vast majority of damage in Santa Cruz County was not in the city, the floodwaters came within approximately three feet of the top of the levee. Had the storm continued or had

high tide occurred at a slightly different time, there might well have been major flooding in the downtown district.

The crux of the problem is siltation; the existing levee system has approximately one-half of the original project protection designed by the Corps of Engineers (protection for a 50-year flood rather than a 100-year flood). The basic issue in terms of the San Lorenzo is what kind of protection can be achieved and what the cost of that protection will be. A current (1982) study by the Corps of Engineers indicates that the city is faced with a minimum annual cost of approximately \$452,000 per year to restore the channel to design capacity, or an alternative cost of \$2,341,000 per year for widening the channels and raising the bridges, attaining certain social/aesthetic benefits associated with that alternative. These annual costs are predicated on a 50-year pay back period.

The benefits to be derived and the level of flood protection desired by the city must be weighed against the call on public funds for other purposes. In the case of the San Lorenzo River--and what can be done to improve both flood protection and aesthetics--the cost figures are extremely high. This is particularly the case since costs associated with river improvements may have to be borne entirely by the local community.

Clearly, the river is a complex and costly resource. Answers to the many questions that revolve about the river are beyond the purview of this Downtown Area Plan. However, in order to address this pressing matter, the following policy is presented.

POLICY: Create a San Lorenzo River Commission to analyze the many complex engineering, financial, and aesthetic aspects of the river. It shall be the responsibility of the commission to make recommendations to the City Council, over time, relative to the problems and opportunities presented by the San Lorenzo River.

SECTION V - OPPORTUNITY SITES

There are numerous opportunity sites scattered throughout the downtown area. In fact, every vacant parcel within the planning area, and those sites that already have structures which might be rehabilitated or renovated, all constitute opportunity sites.

There are three particular sites, however, that represent a larger scale opportunity by virtue of either the size of the parcel, the fact that it is vacant, or its strategic location (refer to Map 23). These include the Town Clock Triangle (bordered by North Pacific Avenue, River Street and Water Street), the Octagon/old county jail complex (the Abbott Square Galleria), and a segment of the San Lorenzo Park Redevelopment Project area near the Longs and Albertson's buildings (River Front Terrace). In these locations, innovative projects could be created which would provide additional housing opportunities and/or commercial facilities.

This section of the plan presents schematic designs which have been carefully analyzed to provide ideas that fit within the scale of the downtown area, and that present interesting concepts for the future. These drawings, when combined with suggestions in the Pacific Avenue Design Plan, provide a series of illustrative and creative ideas for improvement, renovation and redevelopment in the downtown area.

It is important to note that there is no intent to prescribe treatments for these specific locations, but merely to present ideas which give direction for future discussion concerning development in the downtown planning area. Suggested development concepts for these three locations are presented below including descriptions of land uses which might be appropriate for the sites, and schematic drawings which illuminate what might be done in these locations.

TOWN CLOCK TRIANGLE

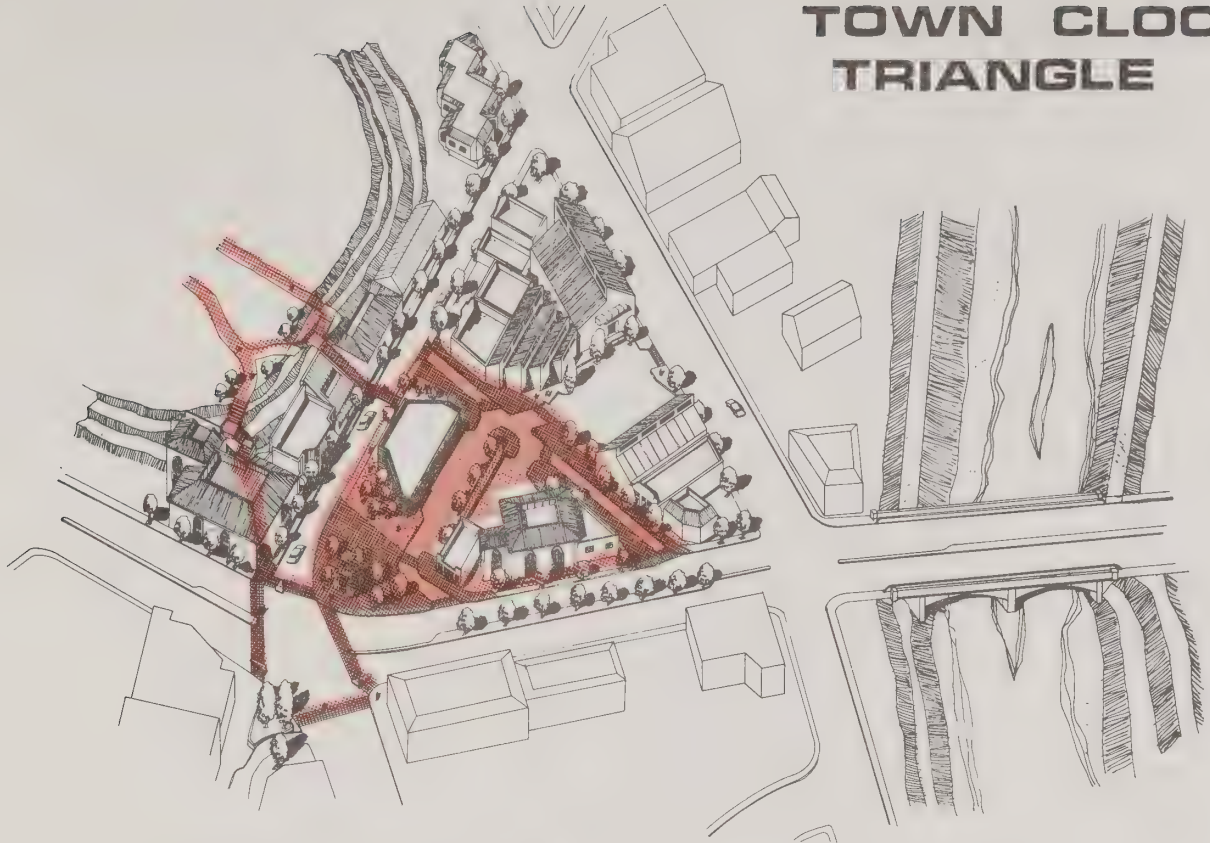
This triangular area, including the Town Clock complex, has potential to develop as a focal point on the northern boundary of the mall. In the past, this area has been used primarily for construction services and some retail businesses. The value of this property, when combined with the potential needs of existing tenants, may provide the stimulus for reuse of the site for other purposes. If

OPPORTUNITY SITES

map 23



TOWN CLOCK TRIANGLE



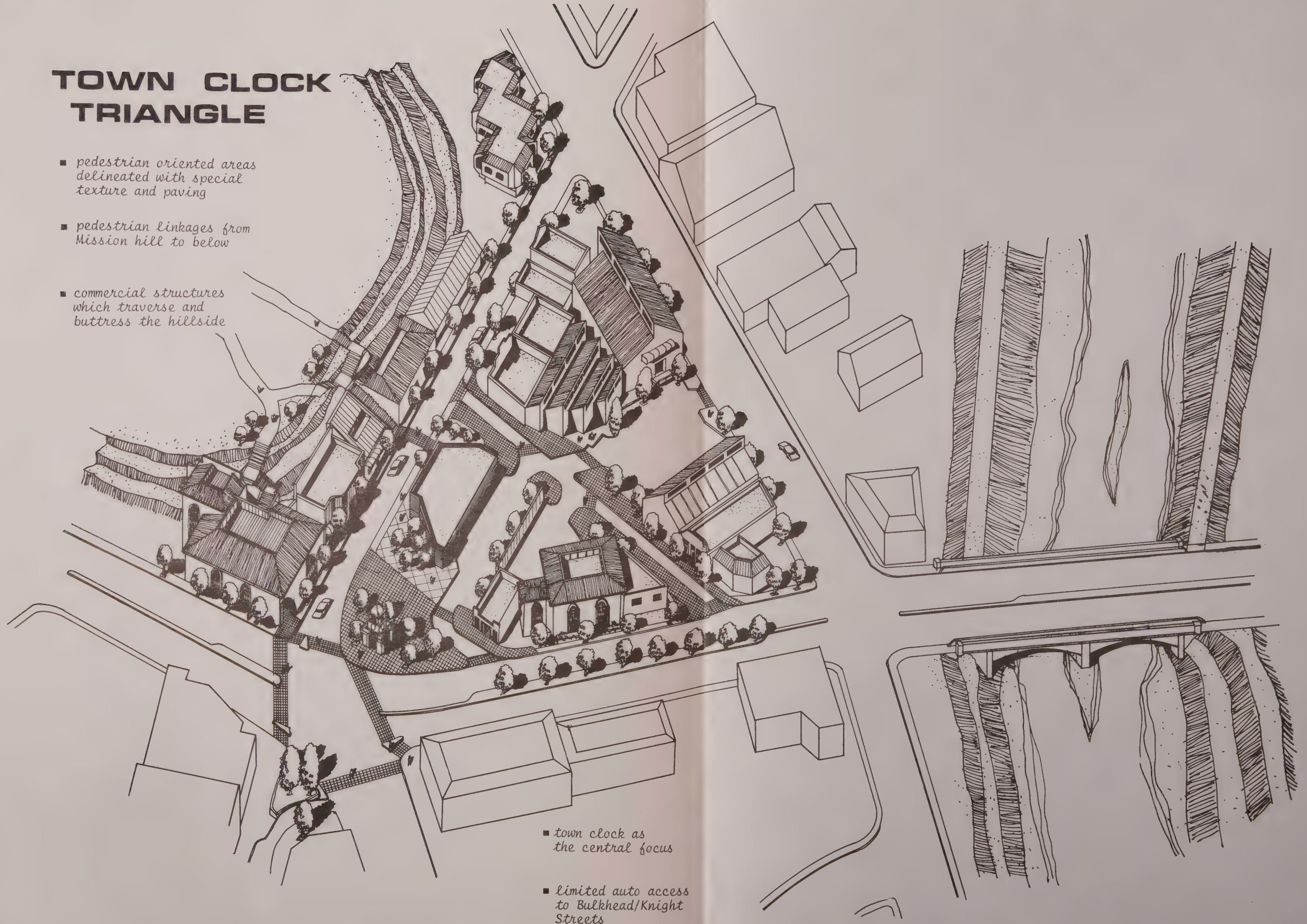
**pedestrian
network**



**commercial
intensification**

TOWN CLOCK TRIANGLE

- pedestrian oriented areas delineated with special texture and paving
- pedestrian linkages from Mission hill to below
- commercial structures which traverse and buttress the hillside



■ town clock as the central focus

■ limited auto access to Bulkhead/Knight Streets

different land uses are considered in the future, a concept could be developed utilizing the existing buildings in a combination of parking, outdoor sales, and retail stores. An example of this can be found in reuse of a warehouse as a camping and outdoor supply store across River Street from this location.

The sketch on the following page gives an example of how the existing structures could be reused to provide a mix of commercial activities. It should be noted that due to the on-site parking requirement, parking has been arranged in a creative way to provide both parking spaces as well as outdoor sales opportunities. Included in this proposal could be the possible abandonment or narrowing of both Knight Street and Bulkhead Street to allow for additional parking or other uses which could be blended into the existing development pattern of the area. With public/private cooperation, the entire triangle area could evolve into a new entryway to the Pacific Garden Mall.

ABBOTT SQUARE GALLERIA

With development of the Cooper Street Mall, and approval of a commercial/office building on the vacant property at the end of Cooper Street, a unique opportunity exists to embellish the mall with a combined development of the Octagon/old county jail/adjacent city parking lot site (termed the Abbott Square Galleria). The key to this development is the eventual closure of the old county jail facility, thus providing a number of unique design opportunities to join the Octagon property to the adjacent city parking lot. Features of this development could include a vaulted pavilion joining the Cooper House, new internal partitioning of the jail facility, and new structures on the city parking lot.

The types of uses appropriate for this development could range from an art gallery in the Octagon, to housing, to office and ground floor commercial uses where appropriate. The new facility would provide all-weather shopping combining the atmosphere of the existing shops in a unique park-like setting. The sketch on the following page provides an approach to the physical development of the site. Again, this is not intended to be a definitive treatment of the area, but merely to suggest in visual form the potential which exists in this location.



**ABBOTT SQUARE
GALLERIA**

looking south from Cooper Street



ABBOTT SQUARE GALLERIA

looking south from the Octagon

ABBOTT SQUARE GALLERIA



looking north from public parking lot
behind the county jail building

RIVER FRONT TERRACE

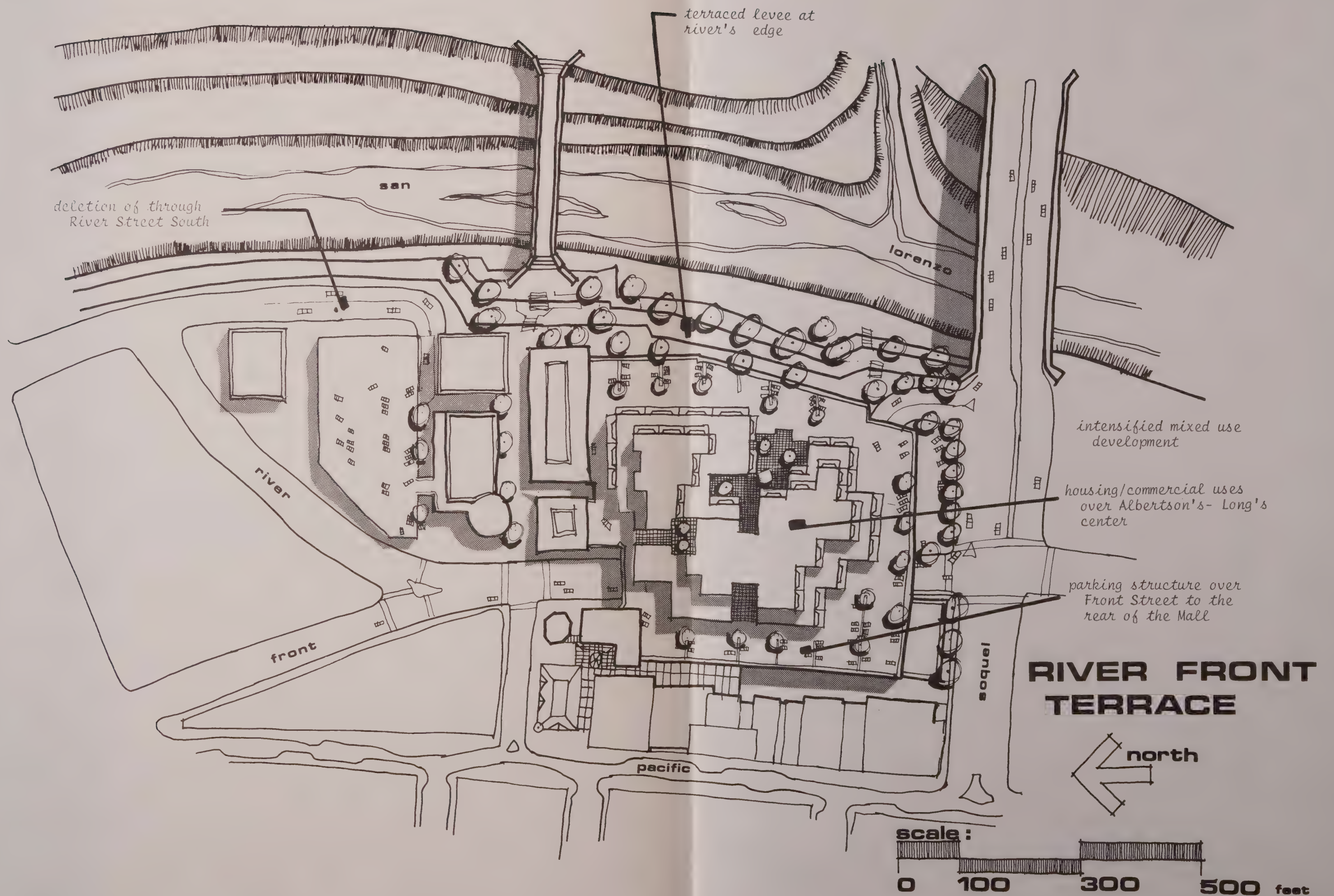
In the early 1960's, after the devastating flood of 1955, the City of Santa Cruz undertook an ambitious redevelopment project which provided land for the county building complex, the Albertson's and Longs shopping center, and other housing uses. As part of this proposal, River Street South was constructed to provide a vehicular lane along portions of the river levee. Since the inception of this idea, extension of River Street southward beyond Soquel Avenue has been dropped, and a possibility exists to reuse portions of this right-of-way for a development adjacent to the San Lorenzo River. If this option is utilized, then a combination commercial/housing facility could be built adjacent to the river to provide an interesting design accent in the downtown and increase urban housing opportunities.

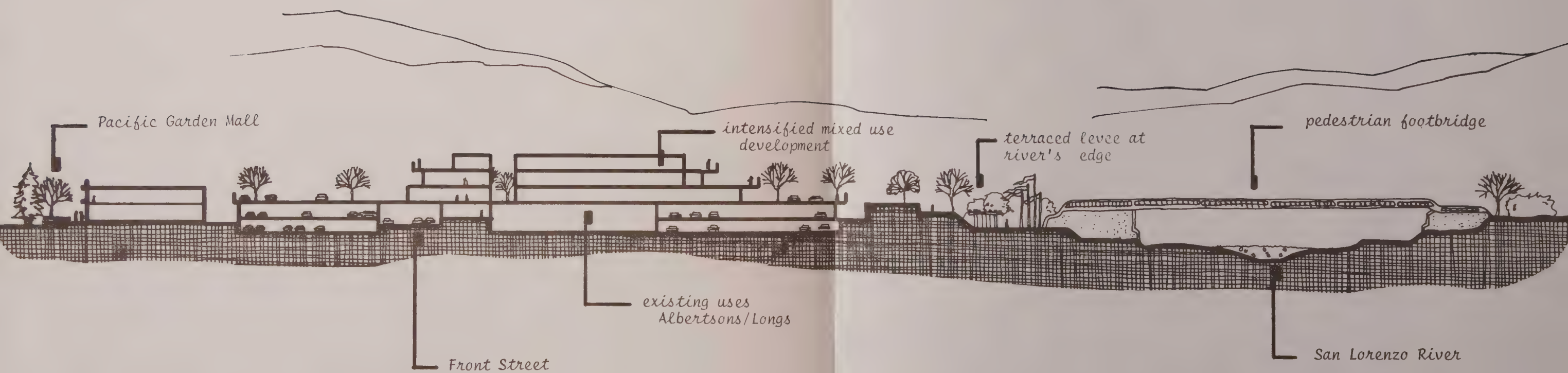
This concept demonstrates the feasibility of orienting future buildings emphasizing the river as a design feature. Discussion of this proposal will illustrate the opportunities for using the river levee along its entire length as both a design feature and an interesting access pattern into the downtown area. Ideas similar to this have been suggested previously by local architects (such as Jim Pandolfi), and bear serious consideration. Again, the schematic which is shown on the following page is intended to stimulate ideas and discussion concerning potential reuse of the San Lorenzo River as an aesthetic and land use opportunity within the City of Santa Cruz.

SUMMARY

The design concepts described above provide benefits other than new ideas for particular sites. These benefits include providing a framework in which additional housing, commercial, and office opportunities can be developed in the downtown area, building upon and complementing the existing conditions. Projects such as these would more completely utilize downtown parking facilities, transit facilities, and other public attributes of the area.

In addition, such ideas provide direction toward intensification of the downtown business area without increasing pressures on surrounding residential neighborhoods. This is important because the close relationship between the





RIVER FRONT TERRACE

section

downtown business and residential areas provides vitality and interest to both. If this balance is endangered through encroachment of commercial uses in the residential area, the unique character of the downtown will be lessened. In short, intensification of the commercial area must be planned in such a manner as to preserve the surrounding residential neighborhoods which provide the economic base for the commercial activities. If these design concepts do no more than provide opportunities for future discussions, they will have succeeded in their purpose.

SECTION VI - IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Downtown Area Plan is part of the process of amending and implementing the General Plan for the City of Santa Cruz. The implementation program is designed to achieve the objectives set forth in the plan in a realistic manner. It identifies recommended improvement projects, provides cost estimates, assigns primary responsibility, alludes to funding sources, suggests the general sequence of implementation, and proposes a mechanism for monitoring the progress of implementing the plan.

IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

The following table lists the improvement programs proposed in the plan. A cost estimate is provided. The groups which would function as lead agencies for implementing that improvement (city departments, other government agencies such as the State Department of Transportation, or private sector participants) are also listed. Finally, possible funding sources are shown in the right-hand column.

It should be noted that those entities listed as lead agencies are not solely responsible for implementing the specific improvement; their authority is limited as well. Citizen groups, city commissions and committees, the City Manager's Office, and city departments which are not specifically listed, will all participate in the implementation process.

Finally, the funding sources suggested are also not definitive. For each improvement all possible funding sources--federal, state, local and private--will be explored. (The improvement programs are organized by section, as they appear in the text of the plan).

<u>Improvement Program</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>	<u>Lead Agency</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
SECTION II - ECONOMICS			
Expand and coordinate downtown promotional activities	Unknown	Private sector	Promotion Tax; private advertising
Increase Promotion Tax	Performed with existing staff	City Manager/ Finance Dept.	Tax assessed against businesses in downtown; proceeds spent on advertising.
Institute free parking downtown on Saturdays	No cost, but loss in revenues	City Manager/ Public Works Dept.	Loss of parking revenues possibly offset by increased sales taxes.
Develop opportunity sites to highest and best use	Unknown	Private Sector responding to public policy.	Private Sector

SECTION III - DOWNTOWN SUBAREAS

DOWNTOWN CORE

Revise and extend Garden Mall Overlay District regulations	Performed with existing staff	Planning Dept.	None required
Extend Mall treatment from Elm Street (transit center project) to Laurel Street area	\$100,000	City Manager/ Public Works Dept.	Assessment district; city contribution
Extend Mall to Cooper Street	\$107,000	Public Works Dept.	Assessment district; city contribution
Beautification on lateral streets: Soquel, Locust, Church, Walnut, Lincoln	\$15,000	Parks & Recreation Dept.	City general funds
Redesign and beautification of two city parking lots (Lots 1 and 4)	\$110-115,000*	Public Works Dept.	Parking District funds

* Budgeted in fiscal 1982-83.

<u>Improvement Program</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>	<u>Lead Agency</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
Create parking structure on Parking Lot No. 2	\$750,000-\$2,000,000+ (depending upon mixed uses of the site)	City Manager/ Public Works Dept.	Parking District funds; possible bonds
Extend Mall treatment on Soquel Ave. from Pacific Avenue to Front Street	\$50,000	City Manager/ Public Works Dept.	Assessment district; city contribution
Obtain first right of refusal on three potential parking sites	None	City Manager/ City Attorney	None required
One-way treatment of Front Street in front of Post Office; changes to Front/River/Cooper streets intersection; and Front and Water streets signal and medians	\$70,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Soquel/Front Street intersection double left-turn pocket	\$1,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Cedar/Center/Chestnut intersection improvements	\$500	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Soquel Ave. & San Lorenzo River Bridge, remove signal and divider	\$5,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Cedar Street/Lincoln Street pedestrian improvements; landscaped islands	\$10,000	Public works Dept.	City general fund
Encourage housing rehabilitation in Downtown Core	Unknown	Planning Dept.	Private sector; HCD funds
Modification to signal at River and Water streets (additional phasing and turn pockets)	\$10,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund

<u>Improvement Program</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>	<u>Lead Agency</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD			
Delete Chestnut Street as a coastal access route	Performed with existing staff	Public Works Dept.	None required
Chestnut Extension improvements; merging lane, sidewalk, etc.	\$60,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Chestnut beautification; Taylor Street to Laurel Street	\$40,000	Parks and Recreation Dept.	Possible assessment district; city general fund
Neighborhood Traffic Improvements: (approved by Council)	\$50,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Improvements to Union/Green/Chestnut intersection	\$15,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Laurel Street sidewalk approaching California Street	\$20,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Initiate preferential parking program (including 2-hour zones and Rincon triangle)	Performed with existing staff; some administrative costs	Planning Dept./ Public Works Dept.	Fees, city general fund
Redesign the Rincon Street triangle	\$40,000	Parks and Recreation Dept.	City general fund
Acquire and develop YWCA vacant parcel for tot-lot	\$65,000+ \$10,000	City Manager/ Parks and Recreation Dept.	City general fund
Expand use of S.C. High School play fields	Unknown (shared maintenance costs)	City Manager/ Parks and Recreation Dept.	City general fund

<u>Improvement Program</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>	<u>Lead Agency</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
Rezone appropriate parcels to residential designations	Performed with existing staff	Planning Dept.	None required
Encourage housing rehabilitation in Downtown Neighborhood	Unknown	Planning Dept.	Private sector; HCD funds
MISSION HILL			
Add height limitations to existing zoning regulations	Performed with existing staff	Planning Dept.	None required
Maintain playfield as recreation resource	Policy statement; no cost	Planning Dept.	None required
Allow only low intensity uses for Neary-Rodriguez Adobe	Policy statement; no cost	Planning Dept.	None required
Acquire adjacent vacant parcel for Adobe parking	\$70,000	City Manager/ Planning Dept.	State Parks Grant
Develop walkway from Adobe to Scope Park	\$35,000	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
SOUTH PACIFIC AVENUE			
Delete Washington Street and add Center Street as a beach/wharf access route	Performed with existing staff	Public Works Dept.	None required
Have Pacific Avenue give way to front Street (a change in stop sign location)	Performed with existing staff	Public Works Dept.	None required
Acquire first right of refusal on potential parking sites	None	City Manager/ City Attorney	None required

<u>Improvement Program</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>	<u>Lead Agency</u>	<u>Funding Source</u>
Adopt "auto center" design guidelines	Performed with existing staff	Planning Dept.	Private sector improvements
NORTH RIVER STREET			
Rezone North River Street subarea to encourage uses which take advantage of the area's natural assets	Performed with existing staff	Planning Dept.	None required
Make North Pacific Avenue one-way south-bound between River and Water streets	Performed with existing staff	Public Works Dept.	None required
Provide for the eventual widening of River Street by acquiring right-of-way along plan line on east side of River Street	Unknown	City Manager/ City Attorney/ Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Acquire state right-of-way parallel to River Street north of Josephine Street	Unknown	City Manager/ Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Widen River Street from Highway 1 to North Pacific Avenue	\$275,000*	Public Works Dept.	City general fund
Develop state right-of-way for access north of Josephine Street	\$75,000	City Manager/ Public Works Dept.	Assessment district
Adopt design guidelines for North River Street	Performed with existing staff	Planning Dept.	None required
Consider establishing a traffic assessment district to provide funds for widening River Street.**	Unknown	City Manager/ Public Works Dept.	Assessment District

SECTION IV - CIRCULATION AND PARKING/PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

All improvements in this section of the plan have been previously listed under the appropriate subarea.

* Does not include cost of right-of-way acquisition.

** Added to plan by Planning Commission and City Council

TIME FRAME

It is clear that implementation of several of the projects recommended in this Downtown Area Plan is contingent upon funding opportunities. Prime examples include many of the more expensive traffic improvements. However, those programs that do not require capital improvements of substance may be implemented immediately. These include zoning changes, adoption of design guidelines, several alterations to the area circulation pattern, signing, pavement markings, etc.

Upon adoption of the Downtown Area Plan, the city would be able to make priority decisions concerning the overall Capital Improvement Program. When other funding sources become available (Federal, state, etc.), these might be combined with CIP monies, if appropriate, to fund projects.

In this era of limited municipal financial resources, it is important to implement those programs which do not require large amounts of money, or for which funds are currently available. It is critical to move forward quickly where the opportunity exists, generating momentum for implementation of the Downtown Area Plan. Other capital improvements in the area will occur as funding opportunities present themselves.

Consideration of maintenance costs is also an important issue. City Council policy requires a maintenance impact report prior to implementation of physical improvements in the city. When each specific improvement program is considered, existing systems or resources and/or additional funding sources should be identified to cover maintenance costs.

Finally, several programs in the plan call for private sector contributions. These are likely to be spread over many years. Neighborhood interest and commitment will determine to what degree the private contributions implement the policies in this plan.

MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

A primary pitfall associated with area plans (or any long-range plans) is that after the initial interest and notoriety associated with adoption of the plan, the thrust of

its programs may dissipate over time. The mechanism proposed here to guard against this diminution of interest is an annual report submitted by the Planning Department to the City Planning Commission and the City Council. This annual report would detail progress to date, and would also give estimates as to which aspects of the plan may be implemented in the following year. Funding opportunities and funding sources would be articulated in this description.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The planning process which has resulted in this Downtown Area Plan included participation by many segments of the community (see Preface). The city's record in providing outreach and information services to the local community is well documented. It is recommended that the city work with interested neighborhood groups and individuals on any particular project which is approaching implementation (final plans for the Rincon triangle improvements, for example). This approach would be pursued on a project-by-project basis, garnering public input as appropriate.

DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN TASK FORCE

MEMBERS

Cynthia Mathews
Deedie Calmes
Marilyn Frame
John Gamman
John Hofacre
Kandy Martin
Paul Niebanck
Elizabeth Powers
Lionel Stoloff
Peder Talbert
Ed VanDerZande

STAFF SUPPORT

Jesus Armas, City Manager's office
Peter Katzlberger, Joe Hall, Larry Pearson, Tim Reynolds, Robert Bennett,
Mary Nourishad, Planning Department
Larry Erwin, Jim Helmer, Linda Christman, Mat Farrell, Public Works Department
Rich Bunnell, Parks Department
Clint Mart, Police Department

DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING DATES

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
January 11, 1983	North River Street Area - Zoning and General Plan designations.
January 18, 1983	North River Street Area - Traffic Improvements, development of state right-of-way, housing development and design guidelines.
January 24, 1983	Downtown Neighborhood Association - Summary of plan recommendations and detail discussion of neighborhood parking program.
January 25, 1983	South Pacific Area and Parking.
February 1, 1983	North River Street Area and Implementation.
February 15, 1983	Opportunity Sites - Design Comments.
March 15, 1983	Review Final Draft: Introduction, Economics, Downtown Core
March 22, 1983	Review Final Draft: Mission Hill Area and North River Street Area.
March 29, 1983	Review Final Draft: North River Street Area, Traffic and Circulation.
April 7, 1983	Finalize recommendations and review final portions of Plan. Last meeting.

DOWNTOWN AREA PLAN TASK FORCE MEETING DATES

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>
September 23, 1982	Introduction and explanation Downtown Area Plan
September 30, 1982	Review of Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report
October 7, 1982	Economics of Downtown - Review of Recht-Hausrath Study
October 14, 1982	Downtown Core - Mall Design Topics and San Lorenzo River Improvements
October 23, 1982	Downtown Core - Circulation and Traffic Improvements
October 26, 1982	Auto Dealer's Association - Discussion of South Pacific Auto Area
October 28, 1982	Downtown Core - Transit Center Mall Improvements, Parking Improvements
November 3, 1982	Downtown Core - San Lorenzo River, Downtown Parking
November 8, 1982	Downtown Neighborhood - Neighborhood Parking - Circulation, Recreation and Housing Rehabilitation
November 18, 1982	Downtown Neighborhood - Zoning and Parking Issues
November 22, 1982	Downtown Neighborhood Association - Review of plan recommendations for down- town neighborhood.
December 2, 1982	Review of general policies being developed in Downtown Area Plan.
January 4, 1983	Mission Hill Area and South Pacific Area.

BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND SUPPORT RESEARCH

Planning Documents

Downtown Area Plan - Existing Conditions and Issue Identification Report, City of Santa Cruz Planning Department, August 1982.

Downtown Economic Study, City of Santa Cruz, Recht Hausrath and Associates, May, 1982.

Downtown Parking Study, City of Santa Cruz, Public Works Department, April, 1981.

General Plan, City of Santa Cruz, Public Works Department, Danadjieva and Koenig Associates, September 1980.

Livable Streets Study - City of Santa Cruz Public Works Department, Jeff Oberdorfer and Associates, May 1979.

Pacific Avenue Design Plan - City of Santa Cruz, Planning Department - Charles Hall Page and Associates, November 1978.

San Lorenzo River Plan, City of Santa Cruz, Public Works Department, Danadjieva and Koenig Associates, September 1980.

General References

Convention Center Potential, City of Santa Cruz Planning Department, Kaiser Marston and Associates, November 30, 1976.

Downtown Economics Study, City of Santa Cruz, Planning Department, Gruen and Gruen Associates, July 1975.

Downtown Idea Exchange Downtown Research and Development Center, 1981-1983.

Economic Report, City of Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce, 1981-1983.

Historic Preservation Plan, City of Santa Cruz Planning Department, October, 1976.

Hotel Study, City of Santa Cruz, City Manager's Office, Laventhol and Horowath, February 1983.

Shopper's Survey, Residents and Visitors, City of Santa Cruz Planning Department, May 1981.

RESOLUTION NS- 15,696

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY
OF SANTA CRUZ ADOPTING THE DOWNTOWN AREA
PLAN AS AN AMENDMENT TO THE GENERAL PLAN,
AND THE LOCAL COASTAL PLAN. GPA/LUPA-83-289

WHEREAS, California Government Code Section 65301 et seq., provides for the adoption of area plans for portions of the city; and in order to implement the General Plan, the City of Santa Cruz does hereby elect to proceed pursuant to said procedures; and

WHEREAS, the area bounded by Front Street on the south, and State Highway 1 on the north and west, and the San Lorenzo River on the east contains significant commercial, residential and community service resources; and

WHEREAS, citizens have indicated a preference to more carefully plan the residential, commercial, and community service portions of this area; and

WHEREAS, portions of this area are in the coastal zone and certain portions of the plan amend previously adopted coastal policies; and

WHEREAS, in response to these conditions, the City Planning Commission, with the concurrence of the City Council, did appoint a Downtown Area Plan Task Force consisting of representatives of the residential, commercial, and civic interests in the downtown area to prepare a draft Downtown Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Area Plan Task Force, did over a six-month period, of time develop a draft Downtown Area Plan for consideration by the City Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the City Planning Commission did recommend adoption of the Downtown Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Council conducted a public hearing at its meeting of January 24, 1984.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz as follows:

- 1) That the City Council has reviewed and considered the environmental assessment for the project and adopts the negative declaration, finding that no adverse impacts will result from the adoption of the Downtown Area Plan and accompanying coastal land use plans;
- 2) That the City Council adopts the Downtown Area Plan as shown in Exhibit "A", with the following findings:
 - a. The adoption of the area plan will encourage and improve residential commercial, and transportation characteristics of the downtown in the manner consistent with sound planning practices;

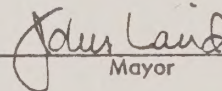
RESOLUTION NS- 15,696

- b. The adoption of said plan will encourage a more beneficial and commercial land uses in the downtown;
 - c. The adoption of said plan will serve the public interest and further the general community welfare;
- 3) The adoption of said area plan will be an amendment to the General Plan and the Coastal Land Use Plan of the City of Santa Cruz.

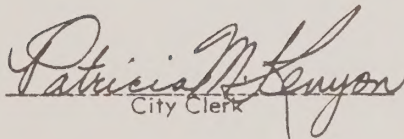
PASSED AND ADOPTED this 24th day of February, 1984,
by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers - Mellis, Weed, Rotkin, Sears-Williams,
Levine, Wormhoudt; Mayor Laird.
NOES: Councilmembers - None.
ABSENT: Councilmembers - None.
ABSTAIN: Councilmembers - None.

APPROVED


Mayor

ATTEST


City Clerk

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



C124888224

